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WHO IS THREATENED NEXT?

HALF the art of war consists in guessing correctly what the enemy will do next. Hitler scores by compelling us to scatter our guesses over the entire map of Europe. Anyone who collected the available evidence with impartial industry could make out a convincing case for an early German attack on Sweden or Holland, or in a move with Italian participation in the Balkans. Against Sweden the Nazi press rages with significant fury: numerous German war-planes violate Swedish territory, and it is reported that yet another expeditionary force is gathering in Germany's Baltic ports. The threat to Holland is grave enough to make tension between Tokio and Washington, over the eventual protection of the Dutch Indies, and Japan is apparently preparing for action by intensive negotiations in Moscow to ensure the friendly neutrality of the Soviet Union. All the threatened neutrals are dealing with their Fifth Columns and with suspicious "foreign" agents. It is conceivable that in an effort to end the war quickly Hitler might risk simultaneous offensive in several directions.

Field-Marshal Göring threatens the Norwegians with terror from the air. Except in the southern districts his ability to do this may be limited for lack of available aerodromes. In Norway there are only four of any consequence, one at Stavanger one at Christiansand, two at Oslo. That is why our air arm has kept up its attacks almost daily on the first of these, and less frequently on the others. It is also attacking the air-bases on the other side of the water, at Sylt and at Aalborg in Denmark. The main problem from our angle is to stop German supplies and reinforcements both by sea and air. To control this coast with its innumerable fjords, each a labyrinth of indentations and islands, is excessively difficult. Our submarines are taking a heavy toll of German ships, but they still accept the risk and some doubtless arrive. Our own penetration of the country has begun, but of reliable news there is little. Our first detachments have landed safely at Namsos and Aandalsnes, north and south of Trondheim, and its German garrison has met the former body of Allied troops in a first encounter at Steinkjer. Since we have as yet no aerodromes in Norway, Allied troops are subjected to German bombing unrestrained by counter-measures. British bombers can attack in Norway, but fighter aeroplanes cannot operate there from home bases. Another landing was made at the far end of Norway's longest fjord, at Laerdal. From this point of rail and road detachments, presumably small, rushed inland with some tanks and joined the Norwegian forces to the north of Hamar and Elverum. The moral effect of this help must have been great, but in this excessively difficult country it is unlikely that Allied troops are as yet present in large numbers. On the other hand, neither side can use or deploy large numbers among these mountains. At Narvik the German force has been driven from the town, but is still in being in the hills.

Meanwhile in the Mediterranean Mussolini still intones the watchword "arm and prepare," and part at least of the staff of the Fascist Party appears to favour an early entry into the war. This the Italian press is facilitating by representing the operations in Norwegian waters as a reverse for the British Navy. Opinion in the Allied countries is somewhat divided about the suggestion that Italy may contemplate an attack on Yugoslavia. M. Reynaud, at a secret sitting of the Senate, recalled the fact that M. Daladier offered in September to discuss Italian claims on France directly. There was, he complained, no response from Rome, but France was still ready for such a discussion. The French Right retains its old tenderness for Italian Fascism and M. Reynaud may have to move warily, but the publication of this statement suggested weakness. On the other hand, the *Daily Telegraph* in an obviously inspired statement, has declared that we should treat any attack on a Balkan State as a *casus belli*. Some rather obscure phrases in the communiqué reporting the meeting of the Supreme War Council can be interpreted in this sense. Yugoslavia, meanwhile, is dealing energetically with her Fifth Column and has arrested the former pro-Nazi Premier, M. Stoyadinovitch, with his Chief of Police. She is also expelling large numbers of German "tourists." The news from Rumania is somewhat contradictory. Large numbers of the pro-German Iron Guard have been released from internment, but this we are asked to interpret as a demonstration of national unity. On the other hand, negotiations with the celebrated Dr. Clodius over the lei-mark exchange ended in a German reverse. Luck in these waters has favoured the Allies, for in a well-timed collision in the fairway of the Danube at Sulina two ships, one doubtfully Greek, the other perhaps Italian, managed to sink each other. In short, the available indications point on the whole to resistance.

The Budget

Sir John Simon has neither accepted Mr. Keynes' plan nor provided any alternative to it. Though he puts estimated expenditure for the coming year at the high figure of £2,667 millions, he proposes only £101 millions of immediate new taxation, which, on an estimated yield of £1,133 millions from existing taxes, leaves a prospective deficit of £1,433 millions to be covered by borrowing. These figures take no account of the proposed Sales Tax. On the face of the matter, this gap of £1,433 millions is much too big to be bridged by borrowing without a large measure of inflation; and it is difficult to see how the Sales Tax can possibly be put at a high enough level to close the gap. If it is levied at a high rate on necessaries, such as clothing, it will become intolerably regressive; if the rate is low, the yield, in view of the necessary exemptions already provided, cannot be very large. The vastly increased expenditure foreseen by the Chancellor must therefore be met mainly out of loans; and it is surely quite fantastic to suppose that so large a sum can be provided without an extensive creation of bank credit.

In any event the State will get both the goods and the money, and the civil population will have to go without to the extent necessary to ensure this. But the certain effect of so high a rate of borrowing will be a heavy adverse balance of payments and a further dangerous depletion of stocks leading to more acute shortage later on. The working-class majority of the population below the income-tax level will be hard-hit by the increases in indirect taxation—hard enough, probably, to intensify the demand for higher wages which is already developing in view of the serious lag between wage-rates and prices. Income-tax payers will probably imagine, since the Chancellor has carefully averted their attention from the real problem, that they are being over-taxed; and yet it will remain true that we are not collectively paying nearly enough to prevent an inflationary rise in prices. It would have been greatly preferable, in our view, instead of making a number of provocative nibbles here and there, to make one big bite at the cherry—that is, unless the Chancellor has private information that we shall not spend on the war nearly so much as he pretends—or that the war will be over before his chickens come home to roost. As neither of these things seems likely, we can only conclude that he is still deliberately disguising the facts. He dare not make a levy on wages (even in the form of deferred pay) without dealing, much more drastically than he is prepared to deal, with profits and with middle-class incomes; so in default of a policy, he slashes the working-class standard of living by means of indirect taxation and hopes that voluntary savings will see him through. The poor *must* pay: the rich *may save* if they feel so patriotically inclined.

It remains to add a few particular comments. The projected Sales Tax is still too embryonic for much to be said about it; but the deferring of it is likely to lead to a rush to buy now, especially in the case of clothing, and thus to a sharp rise in prices not under control. If the tax is to come, the sooner it is clearly defined and brought into actual operation the better. Of the new taxes, the most unwise is the too drastic increase in postal rates, especially on postcards and printed matter. There are better ways of stopping wasteful advertising than one which will, amongst other disadvantages, destroy one of the main methods of forming democratic opinion by ruining propagandist and educational societies. As for the limitation of dividends and the prohibition of bonus shares, both are desirable in themselves, but will do little to check consumption. It should be noted that the yield of the Motor Duties, in face of petrol rationing, indicates that the car-owning classes are still a good way off the maximum taxation they can bear. In contrast, the increased duties on working-class luxuries and necessities are not offset by any socially progressive measures such as those envisaged by Mr. Keynes.

The Rail-charge Increases

After the formalities of the first day's debate on the Budget, the House was almost empty when Mr. Ridley raised the important question of the 10 per cent. increase in rail charges, including those of the L.P.T.B. Mr. Ridley confined his criticism to the arbitrary way in which the Minister had made the decision, without consulting the Railway Rates Tribunal or publishing any reasoned justification for it. Mr. Herbert Morrison and Mr. John Wilmot broadened the debate into an attack on the whole agreement, and, much to their own and everyone else's surprise, elicited the statement that such increases now follow automatically upon any "unavoidable" increases of cost; and are granted in disregard of such considerations as a growing gross revenue and decreasing proportion of overheads. The Minister, who read his speech without much sign of understanding it, was obviously ill at ease; and even the Railway Directors seemed disconcerted by his decision that railway shareholders, having first generously made up the salaries of employees at present with the Forces, should then extort the price of their generosity from the public. The debate was sufficient to show that our original criticism of the agreement was fully justified. Its net effect will be to make home rails a first-class investment, to stimulate "the vicious spiral," and to remove the consumer's defence against exploitation. We hope the Labour Party will raise the matter again at the first opportunity.

Russian Conversations

By evacuating Petsamo at a time when the war in Scandinavia might have served as a good excuse for evading the terms of the treaty with Finland, the Soviet Government has taken a positive action which is more significant than any verbal or printed declaration. Russia's approach to the British Government with a view to a new trade treaty further encourages the idea that Stalin is by no means anxious to help the Nazis, however little anxious he may be for Mr. Chamberlain and M. Reynaud to be the victors. After some delay Lord Halifax has replied to M. Maisky that Britain is ready to explore the possibilities of renewing the trade conversations which were broken off last autumn. Britain's timber needs, rudely increased by the war in Scandinavia, may make the Government more ready for additional Russian trade. The chief difficulty is mutual suspicion and wounded *amour-propre*. Russia remains excessively sensitive; and Britain, fighting a war, has necessarily become more tough and inquisitorial in her dealings with all neutral States. The British Government will necessarily wish to know how far exports entering Russia are destined for Germany, and will probably ask questions about supplies of Russian goods going to Germany. With these latter the British have neither the right nor the power to interfere, but the information which most countries publish will naturally be desired as a preliminary to deciding what Russian goods should be bought by this country. Such preliminary enquiries are likely to be misunderstood by highly suspicious negotiators, and the best British approach is probably a very direct and undiplomatic offer to buy from the U.S.S.R. for our own use as large a proportion as possible of those raw materials of war which Russia might otherwise send to Germany.

The Rights of Man

The Drafting Committee, which is at work on Mr. Wells's original outline of the Rights of Man, has finished its task, and the *Daily Herald* has generously released the completed document to the whole press. It begins with an admirably phrased introduction summarising the position in which the ordinary man finds himself in a state of society in which "political, economic and social collectivisation are being forced upon him." At historical intervals democrats have stated the needs of their age in the form of declarations of common rights. In the eighteenth century these rights were the demand of the bourgeoisie to freedom from feudal privilege, autocratic government and clerical authoritarianism Church. To-day the drafters of this declaration have seen that the first demand is the "right to live," i.e., the right to economic security and to a fair share of the warmth and nourishment and mental opportunity which society has the power to confer. The declaration is thus both a repetition of the demand for such personal rights as freedom of speech, a fair trial, and security from arbitrary treatment, and at the same time a declaration of the need for the socialist economy. These two conceptions are often regarded as incompatible; if the necessary economic change is postponed until war begins between the dispossessed and those with property, then indeed it will be too late to save personal rights. The conception behind this document, which represents the real wishes of the overwhelming majority of common people to-day, is that it is not too late, given the proper leadership, to carry out the essential socialist reconstruction for the benefit, and not at the expense, of the citizen. But what of the democratic leadership to translate this conception into action?

Neglect of Civil Aviation

After months of delay the British Overseas Airways Corporation was officially born on April 1st. Hitler having temporarily caused the suspension of its Scandinavian services, it was left to Sir Samuel Hoare to announce that its transatlantic services will not be resumed this summer. Once more we must remark on the short-sightedness

of this economy. If the Admiralty needs our civil machines for naval purposes, others can be purchased in the States. In this war every link with America is of immeasurable value; every service suspended damages that commercial prestige on which victory so largely depends. The same argument applies to the proposed service to Turkey. As a counter to our trade-agreement, the Germans started a line to Istanbul, which is now running. But the Air Ministry still finds it impossible to permit a British service. We are glad, however, to note that the Lisbon line, connecting with the Yankee Clipper, for which we have so long argued, is to come into operation next month. It will be maintained by a fleet of Frobishers and run via Bordeaux.

The Budget in the House

Our Parliamentary Correspondent writes: The House was full for the Budget. It was not so full when Sir John Simon resumed his seat. His speech was lucid, and agreeable to listen to, but much too long. The Chief Government Whip slept through most of it. The first lobby comment "orthodox but courageous" gave way rather quickly to "pedestrian and inadequate," but members generally were agreed that the Budget, as a whole, would have a good press; and this proved to be the case.

A fair summary of opinion in the House of Commons would, I think, be as follows:—"Estimated expenditure much as expected, and still far below that of Germany. Balance between taxation and revenue well struck. New taxation stiff, but not too unfair. Outright rejection of Keynes scheme thankfully received—especially by the City and Transport House. Some apprehension regarding the future."

There will be grumbling about the rise in postage rates, and a good many members feel that a straight tax on all retail sales would have been preferable to the rather complicated "purchase" tax outlined by the Chancellor. It was generally agreed that the most interesting—and the most constructive—feature of an otherwise unimaginative Budget is the decision to limit dividends, and prohibit the issue of bonus shares, during the period of the war. This at least shows some grasp of underlying realities, and future requirements.

Nevertheless it is clear that neither the House nor the public are yet ready to face up to the full implications of the economic problem which confronts us. The Chancellor took refuge in the shortage of man-power and raw materials, but, whatever the cause, the fact remains that we are at this moment spending on our war effort about £1,000 millions less than Germany per annum. And this does not take into account such illicit booty as the Nazis may acquire from time to time in countries which they are kind enough to take under their protection.

Doubtless we can raise £1,400 millions by loan this year. But can we raise over £2,000 millions next year, and the year after, without resort to compulsion in some form? There would seem to be no escape from it if the war continues.

Meanwhile sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof—in the opinion of the majority. The Budget will at any rate effect some reduction of consumption. It will not be seriously criticised. And Labour members are pleased that Savings Certificates, up to the maximum permitted amount, will in future be excluded from the operation of the Means Test.

The End of the Casual Reader

This week THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION appears in its new "Scandinavian" format for the first time. We are glad to be able to assure readers that, by economising the use of space, we have been able to retain the same amount of reading material as we had in more spacious days. We would, however, repeat that, after this week, unless each reader orders his copy from his newsagent or has it sent to him by post from this office, he will be very unlikely to obtain a copy. After April 29th, in order to avoid waste of paper, we have, in common with all other periodicals, agreed to accept no returns of unsold copies. This lays upon the newsagent the loss for every copy he does not sell; and quite naturally he will not in future carry a large number of copies for the occasional reader. It is therefore necessary for readers to order next week's copy of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION *now*.

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RED HERRINGS

A PEOPLE'S liberties cannot be maintained without a struggle; they are seldom lost without an excuse.

The attack always comes from those whose main fear is for their property. The Rothermere press usually leads the hunt. Riding close behind are found Conservatives of the "take-them-up-in-an-aeroplane-and-drop-them-overboard" school, people who are frightened because some doctrine which they dislike gains ground in the working classes or among the young. National danger gives such people their best opportunity. They made the most of the last war, and they are trying to make the most of this. They lump together everyone they dislike; enemy aliens, pacifists, Communists and Socialists—the "Reds," in fact. If they were given a free hand they would move on through the suppression of Communists and the wholesale internment of aliens to a general destruction of free speech and working-class institutions until we became the exponents of that Fascism which we are supposed to be fighting to defeat. For years these comfortable people have discussed the warning of the Left that in every country of Europe and America, the Nazis were adopting the same tactics of internal aggression. They scoffed at those of us who exposed the new brand of "Conservative defeatism"—those well-to-do and well-connected people who thought the Nazi gangsters could be bribed to act as the rich man's bodyguard Now, suddenly, they are awakened to danger by the example of Captain Quisling.

So the Fifth Column is real after all! Who does it consist of? Despite the example of Norway, where the traitors consisted, among others, of a Bishop, high army officers and distinguished business men, and of Yugoslavia where an ex-Premier has been wisely placed under arrest, they look for the Fifth Column among the humble and those of low degree, not in the City of London or in Debrett. The gentry are above suspicion which is kept for exiled servant maids, and leaders of working-class factions. Perhaps it is dangerous to follow the true scent; one of their own set might be uncovered. So off they go in full cry after the old red herrings.

There is, of course, a real problem, or rather there are a variety of real problems. First there are the enemy aliens of many types and opinions. The vast majority are non-political refugees driven from their country for racial reasons and offered temporary hospitality in this country until they can find a permanent home overseas. Quite distinct from these is the minority of exiles whose main objective is the overthrow of National Socialism, and strangely enough it is these anti-Nazis who are the chief butt of the Rothermere press. To put refugees of either of these categories, whom we have saved from Nazi concentration camps, into our internment camps, decent though they are, would be indeed an ironical comment on our war for freedom. Amongst so many there must be suspicious characters, and may well be some whom the Nazis have placed here. No one is in a position to weed these out except the Home Office which, very sensibly, make use of advisory tribunals to examine aliens, where it feels the need of a third party judgment based on first-hand knowledge and cross-examination of special cases. Some of the original 112 one-man tribunals did their jobs badly; the twelve new regional tribunals have been appointed to re-examine aliens who were not given a clean sheet, but permitted to live in their homes under supervision and restrictions. Such tribunals are a help to the Home Office and a decent democratic safeguard against arbitrary police action. This further examination may have the result of aiding the authorities to comb out some dubious characters who were given too much freedom, or to release from restrictions some whose good will is clear.

The real spy is less likely to call himself by a German name; he is more often a neutral rather than of enemy origin, and nobody except the Home Office is likely to be in a position to discover him. If all the enemy aliens in this country were interned, the most important spies would almost certainly slip through the net, while the services of a large number of innocent people, pathetically anxious to aid us in our struggle would have been lost. One note of warning. A few unwise refugees are insufficiently careful not to offend the susceptibilities of a nation at war. A refugee, welcomed here because of the persecution that threatened him abroad, cannot expect much public sympathy if he goes about attacking a country which, with all its faults, is in fact at this minute protecting him.

An Englishman who actively opposes the war stands on a somewhat different footing. Nothing can shake the ethical position of a pacifist who shows by his life that he only accepts a loyalty that transcends all national loyalties. Mr. Chamberlain made it clear at the beginning of the war that he had no intention of repeating the muddle of the last war, in which genuine conscientious objectors

went in and out of prison. An effort was to be made in this totalitarian war to find occupations which such men could voluntarily engage in. There are many such occupations, and it is regrettable that tribunals have been too apt to allot only "non-combatant" service, and that farmers and others are sometimes unwilling to give employment of a kind which the tribunals would regard as satisfactory. Those who refuse to employ the pacifist who has proved his sincerity should consider whether they are really doing any service to their country if they force into prison sincere men whose religion happens to differ from their own. If the Peace Pledge Union sticks to pacifism, advocates its doctrine of non-violence, and does not allow its branches to be used by political groups which are not pacifist at all, it stands on firm ground and will be defended by every genuine democrat.

The Communists, as the letters we publish this week from Mr. Strachey and Mr. Gollancz show, have suddenly adopted a line of policy which exasperates many who have travelled lately with them. In view of the now patent fact that Hitler is determined to extend his dominion over France and Britain, it would seem a kind of madness on the part of revolutionaries to urge that Mr. Chamberlain is more dangerous to the British working class than Hitler. To analyse the European situation on Marxist grounds is proper; to struggle against the real or imaginary danger that the war would be extended to Russia, is sensible; to attack the home and foreign policies of the National Government; to urge that when possible we should have a negotiated peace—all these are activities which a democratic Government should permit in wartime. But to advocate sabotage in the factories, as some underground propaganda in France is doing, cannot be defended on any ground of civil liberty. Men who go to these lengths are only entitled to respect if they have thought out the consequences of their revolutionary line and are willing to suffer its penalties, as, for instance, Lenin, Tukachevsky, Sir Roger Casement and the P.O.U.M. were prepared to do. Many of the Communist rank and file do not, we are confident, understand the implications of the present party line. Do they deceive themselves into the belief that we are on the edge of another war with Russia or another Versailles? How many would maintain their present line if they realised that the real question is whether the west of Europe should suffer the fate of Denmark, Czechoslovakia and Poland? They fought against Fascism in Spain, they have been the leaders of the anti-Fascist front, but to-day, to use the phrase they have so often used of others, they have become "objectively" allies of Hitler. Moscow simply fools them. *Izvestia* now announces that "it is clear that the military help which the British and French proposed to send to Finland, ostensibly to fight Bolshevism, was intended to be used to expand the war in Scandinavia against Germany." Just so; everything Moscow said and everything said here by Communist apologists, such as Mr. Pritt, was just so much nonsense. The mass of the British working class shows by its votes at by-elections that it is not even interested in changes in the "party line," and it would be a great error to take repressive action on any ground except that of sabotage.

We hear little to-day of British Fascism. The word Fascism is to-day an unpopular word and its advocates have generally discarded the label. Sometimes masquerading as Buchmanites, sometimes preaching a vicious anti-semitism, sometimes urging the need of social reform or national discipline, the Fascists may often keep out of the public eye and carry out their propaganda in circles from which the Fifth Column may hope to be recruited. Like other kinds of "defeatism" it mainly only thrives, in so far as it does thrive, because of the lack of confidence in our leaders, and the lack of positive lead to a goal that seems worth living or dying for. It is a tragedy to-day that the extreme Left and the Labour Party have both missed the opportunity which the war offers for building up working-class power in this country. In the absence of Conservative leadership skilful and bold working-class leadership might yet give us a large instalment of Socialism during the war and ensure that it cannot be abandoned, as it was last time, when the peace comes. The only effective reply to "defeatist" propaganda is to show on the one side that we are fighting for objects which the common man can feel to be valuable, and not merely holding on to our property and our empire, and on the other to organise our public life on a basis of far more genuine equality, so that the innumerable grievances of the poor to-day cannot be exploited for interested purposes. That is the sort of revolution that we must and shall get in time; it is the cure for an evil that repression will only increase. If there are spies and saboteurs to suppress, the Government has the powers. If it wants to find the "Fifth Column" it will let the hounds of Lord Rothermere's hunt yap themselves hoarse, while it searches in more respectable quarters not so far from home.

PARIS AND THE WAR

In this summer weather one does not feel like writing about politics or the war; I'd like to write about the tulips in the Tuileries, or about the Deux Magots, where, on the sunny terrace you can order your apéritif as usual, except three days a week, when cheap champagne has become the recognised ersatz for the forbidden Cinzano and Dubonnet; or about the Café de Flore next door, where I ran into Picasso the other night. I'd even like to write about the revival of *Cyrano de Bergerac* at the Comédie Française, and of Sardou's *Madame Sans-Gêne*—one, heroic in an aristocratic sense, the other heroic in a democratic sense, and both immensely popular, which is perhaps significant of the tastes of the "average" Paris public in the year 1940—I don't mean the highbrows, who go to *Maya* and Giraudoux's *Ondine*, but the nice simple kind of folks who go to the Comédie Française, who murmur to themselves their favourite lines from *Cyrano*, and clap their hands sore after the

Molière a du génie et Christian était beau. . . .

The heroic stuff is going down well. Altogether Paris has been feeling a lot better this last fortnight than before. There are no easy illusions about Norway, but there is a feeling that Paul Reynaud was perhaps right when he said that Germany, though starting with "a tactical success," had made an "enormous strategic error" in attacking Norway the way she did. And a few days later, Reynaud said that the first great battle between the Germans and the Allies had been fought on the sea, and that Germany had lost it. When the word "Allies" was used instead of "British," it was thought at first that this was merely a matter of form; but soon it was disclosed that a good number of French ships were taking part, in one form or another, in the Norwegian naval war, and that "French troops had landed in Norway and were taking part in the operations." Those who once talked about "dying for Prague" or "dying for Danzig" no longer said anything against "dying for Oslo." The war is being taken seriously; and if the Reynaud Government is to-day in a stronger position than anyone would have imagined a fortnight ago, it is because it is showing that "increased energy" in the conduct of the war for which both the Chamber and the Senate had clamoured just before Daladier was turned out of office. There is no reason for suggesting that the Daladier Government would not have acted as "energetically" had it been confronted with the Norwegian situation; but it just so happened that Reynaud was in office when Norway was attacked; and Governments are ultimately judged on results.

In my last article I gave some account of the various reasons why the Reynaud Government was at first given such a shabby reception by the Chamber, and why its early overthrow by the Senate was confidently predicted by many. The Radicals felt that their leader, Daladier, had been wronged, and that their Party had been cheated out of its "traditionally" (though by no means legally) predominant position in the Government; Bonnet and Guy La Chambre, two of the Radicals who lost their jobs in the Cabinet change, were trying to work the Radicals into a state of frenzy against Reynaud, the "usurper"; Daladier himself was in bad humour, and his failure to attend the Chamber meeting when Reynaud read the ministerial declaration, and later his failure to go to London for the meeting of the Supreme War Council, were interpreted in the obvious way by those who wished to do so. The Right for their part were frantic with rage at the sight of half a dozen Socialists, including three Ministers, on the Government bench; and the Senate expressed disapproval of Reynaud by arranging an ovation in honour of Daladier; for Daladier, like the greater part of the Senate, is "rural" in outlook and temperament, while Reynaud is too much of the Parisian, with cut-and-dried ideas about rationing, and "super-sacrifices," and with an unhealthy liking for the Socialists. And then, of course, there were all the old grievances against Reynaud's "Churchillian outlook" and against the peculiar line he took at the time of Munich, when the *Action Française* wrote a charming nursery rhyme:

S'ils s'obstinent ces cannibales
A faire de nous des héros,
Il faut que nos premières balles
Soient pour Mandel, Blum et Reynaud.

Ancient history, no doubt; but it continued to rankle in many minds. Not least in the mind of little Marcel Déat, whom I met one day at the Chamber, about a week after the Government had been formed, and just after Reynaud had agreed to the demand made by the Radicals for a debate on "general policy." Déat, who together with Marquet and Montagnon, left the Socialist Party in 1933 and founded that rather odd Néo-Socialist party with its "order-authority-nation"

slogan soon afterwards, and who in May, 1939, distinguished himself (and infuriated Daladier) with an article in the *Oeuvre* called " Die for Danzig ? " was now after Reynaud's blood. He had just announced his intention to " interpellate " the Government, and although he confessed that the London declaration about Anglo-French unity both during and after the war had strengthened Reynaud's hand to some extent, he was still confident that the Government would be defeated with the help of a good half of the Radicals, Flandin's friends, the entire Right, and, above all, of the " pacifist " Paul Faure Socialists who, Déat claimed, were now in rebellion against Blum. Paul Faure, he thought, would bring 20 or 30 votes into the anti-Reynaud camp. It is quite true that Paul Faure had written that week some astonishing articles in the *Pays Socialiste*. In that paper, he had first described his *rêve insensé* (as he called it) : Mr. Sumner Welles calling together a round-table conference at which the rulers of Europe would settle all their economic difficulties, and so bring the war to an end ; for to Paul Faure, the war was just a matter of economic maladjustment. And then, later, he went off the deep end about the Reynaud Government, and about the presence of six Socialists in it ; and he added, with a touch of malice, that Blum was really the only person in the Socialist party who liked Reynaud.

And then came the invasion of Denmark and Norway. The first reaction in Paris—as no doubt also in London—was of general dismay. "They've got away with it again," people said with anger and amazement. And then came the sinking of the German cruisers, and the victory of Narvik, and the mood of Paris changed overnight. People were genuinely happy at last.

At first cautiously, and then, more explicitly, Reynaud described to the Senate and the Chamber, the results of Allied naval action in Scandinavia ; and the enthusiasm was remarkable ; standing up, they cheered from one end of the House to the other. In the lobbies, M. Déat no longer said anything about wiping the floor with Reynaud ; and M. Paul Faure forgot—at least for the present—about Mr. Sumner Welles's economic round-table conference. So, for the present and unless we suffer some heavy reverses either in the military or the diplomatic field, Reynaud sits pretty. It is not even certain that Parliament would, in the present circumstances, like Daladier back as Premier.

For, apart from the action in Scandinavia, great satisfaction has been caused by Reynaud's work at the Quai d'Orsay ; and his diplomatic work does not seem to have been without effect on the neutrals. A vigorously conducted French diplomacy is a useful addition to naval victories for impressing neutrals. The two combined have certainly encouraged the neutrals to do certain things they might not have risked before : for instance, the round-ups and the martial law in Holland ; and the arrest of Stoyadinovitch, about whom the French Government may have known quite a lot. No less important is the prominence given to Weygand and his Near Eastern Army ; and to the interview given by Weygand to a Rumanian paper, in which the General suggested that his army could be transported at very short notice to almost any point of the Mediterranean Basin.

While one cannot, at the present stage, be too categorical about anything, the cumulative effect on neutrals and non-belligerents of German naval losses and other setbacks in Norway, and a more active French diplomacy, seems to have been quite considerable. Reynaud seems to have carefully avoided following two pieces of advice : gaining Italy's friendship " at any price," and bashing Russia over the head. Regarding Russia, one thing at least seems certain : her great fear of seeing Germany in possession of Sweden and Norway. As Victor Serge, who is an expert on Russia, remarked the other day : " Stalin must be praying for a British victory in Norway." Their handing over of Petsamo to the Finns is considered a good sign here ; though there are still some who wonder whether, for general reasons, the Russians have not placed Murmansk at the disposal of the German navy.

As for Italy, Reynaud did not follow the advice administered on many sides that he should send an " extraordinary mission " to Rome. The idea was strongly supported not only by people outside the cabinet, such as Laval and, apparently, Paul Boncour, but also by a few members of the Government. A trial balloon to that effect was launched in the " Radical " *Oeuvre*, and the same idea was supported by the *Justice*, a paper officially controlled until a few days earlier, when he became a member of the Government, by M. Frossard, the present Minister of Information. The pro-Italians claim that an agreement can be reached with Italy ; though they suggest that it can be done without any territorial surrenders—a blatant misconception of the whole Mussolini mentality. Reynaud seems to have realised that to grovel to Italy at a time when Mussolini sends birthday greetings to Hitler, with good wishes for a victorious war, can be interpreted by the neutrals only as a hopeless sign of weakness on the part of the Allies. The offer of general talks, Reynaud yesterday told the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate, had been made to Italy as long ago as last September ; and Mussolini had not replied. The offer still held good ; but it was no use doing anything more about it. If Mussolini's speech to-day was more innocuous than was expected, it was largely because there had been no grovelling by the Allies, and because with a large part of the German fleet wiped out, Italy, in case of war, might find herself badly outnumbered by the Allied navies.

I have not much room to talk about French internal affairs. The country, as already said, is in a much better mood than it was a couple of weeks ago. Reynaud himself has always been a strong supporter of sound democratic standards—though he agrees with most Frenchmen that in wartime democratic liberties may have to be severely curtailed. This curtailment continues. M. Henri Roy, the Minister of the Interior, has very strong views about the Communists, and is responsible for the decree making persons guilty of Communist propaganda liable to the death penalty. And the trial of the Communist deputies was, shall I say ? on the tough side, according to liberal ideas of legal procedure. As regards the censorship, it must be said that it showed a very definite improvement during the first two or even three weeks of the Reynaud regime ; one was able to write freely about almost anything, and the *Canard*, for instance, became really amusing again. M. Frossard, the Minister of Information, is himself an able newspaper man, who understands the press. In the last few days, however, whole articles, especially on foreign affairs have been suppressed, and others heavily blue-pencilled. The international situation is admittedly exceptionally delicate at the moment ; so the great boom in blue pencils may be only a passing phase ; at least one hopes so.

ALEXANDER WERTH

Paris, Sunday, April 21st.

A LONDON DIARY

MR. Duff Cooper was so eloquent, I'm told, that he made his audience forget, on St. George's day, that they had come to hear Winston. As for the matter of his speech, tastes differ, but at least he has the merit of consistency when he attacks the German people and says :

> On the last occasion when we defeated Germans in the field, they came grovelling and whining and protesting that the fault was not theirs.

This description of Ebert, Otto Braun and Hermann Müller seems to me as unhistorical and caddish as Hitler's own myth of " the stab in the back." The Social Democrats who saw Germany through defeat and revolution may have been short-sighted and were certainly too humane to their former war-lords ; but they were working men of dignity and courage who had spent their lives in fighting German imperialism and desired with all their hearts a democratic Germany and a peaceful Europe. Still, I am not sure that it is not a good thing that our Conservative politicians should say bluntly what they have all felt in their hearts, but concealed out of deference to Mr. Chamberlain. The official propaganda line at the beginning of the war was too obviously propaganda to impress the Germans. You cannot persuade a people to overthrow tyranny unless you really want them to overthrow it ; and no one can really believe in German freedom who only mixes with the upper classes. The Junkers, the Civil Service and the small bourgeoisie *are* anti-democratic and German freedom will only be achieved if the industrial workers and the peasants can achieve power. But these classes are not what Mr. Duff Cooper means by Germany and I am not sure that he would not prefer to keep a Junker-ridden Germany under military domination by the Allies rather than trust those classes which proved their devotion to democracy after the last war. The Government, judging from Sir John Reith and other Ministers, has now decided that it is fighting the German people. I can see no conceivable hope for Europe if that is to be our attitude. Such a change of policy means that the Labour Party and the Trade Unions can now make quite clear their fundamental disagreement and their determination to give the decent forces in Germany a chance of asserting themselves at the first opportunity. They will be the more likely to be listened to in Germany now that their view contradicts the official line.

* * *

I had a talk this week to Charles Jarman, National Organiser of the Seamen's Union, about the position of the Norwegian and Danish seamen after Hitler's Scandinavian venture. He tells me that there are some 32,000 members of the Norwegian Seamen's Union and

between 5,000 to 6,000 whalers now on their way home from their annual expedition to the Antarctic. There won't be any "quisling" among these, for the solidarity of the Norwegian and British seamen has been one of the striking features of our period. Only last year the first international wage agreement was signed through the co-operation of the two unions. When the invasion occurred, the Norwegian Union's funds were seized and the seamen were left in their ships all over the world without any prospect of receiving pay. The same is true of the Danes. Within a week the International Transport Federation had arranged to re-establish the Norwegian Union in London and guarantee both all the officers and men the prevailing rates of pay in British money. Jarman told me of one illuminating incident about the sailors. Into the little office in Bermondsey walked a seaman to pay up the last three months dues. "I expect you are hard up now," he remarked; "here's twelve months in advance." I do not think we fully understand the feeling of the seamen, whether belligerent or neutral, about the German methods of conducting naval war. In the last war it was so strong that a conference of seamen from all over the world was held in London, which agreed that not a ton of food or anything else should be carried to help the men who were murdering seamen all over the world. This time the methods of war are even more brutal. Eighty per cent. of the Norwegian seamen who lost their lives have died of exposure because their ships had been torpedoed, in defiance of the convention signed two years ago, miles from land and their boats machine-gunned. The feeling is correspondingly intense. Jarman told me that he was sure that the German seamen felt intensely their sense of isolation from other seamen. For there is a powerful solidarity of the sea. Men from Hamburg and district have always been democratic and they know precisely what seamen of other countries think of the practices of their Government. Now thousands of these German seamen are sitting in enforced idleness in neutral ports all over the world. The only reason why they do not mutiny, a Norwegian trade union organiser who had visited Germans in Vigo told me, was their fear of revenge by our seamen. They had been told that, after what had been done by the Nazis, the British sailors would cut off their right hands and their little toes, and they have been induced to believe it.

* * *

Bandying texts of scripture is one of the oldest and least profitable of British pastimes. The Puritans loved it; the Old Testament provided excellent texts for thwarting the enemies of the Lord. They were apt to overlook Christ's teaching, which sought to supersede Jehovah, the Jewish tribal deity of wrath, by the universal deity of love and mercy. I thought this was agreed upon to-day when the fact that a phrase appears in Biblical texts no longer gives it divine authority. I was the more surprised to read the following dialogue between a conscientious objector and Judge Essenhigh, of the Lancashire Tribunal:

> Whereas the New Testament is inspired the Old Testament is scarcely worth the paper it is written on? I am sorry for you if you do not accept the whole Bible as the inspired will of God. That is where the moderns have gone wrong.
>
> The applicant: If we were to take the Old Testament literally we should all have half a dozen wives each. We should strike our enemies into pieces. —*Manchester Guardian*, April 17th.

This excellent retort might have been strengthened by reference to the private life of King David or any other equally odd argument for the morality of 3,000 years ago. I take it that the applicant in this case held, as serious Christians commonly do hold, that the essentials of Christianity are stated in the Sermon on the Mount. If Christianity is not a doctrine of loving your enemies and turning your other cheek to the assailant, what is it? And yet we find so-called Christians arguing like Mr. Healy in his reply to his critics on the wireless on Sunday night. When he started talking about texts of scripture, I said: "I do hope he doesn't quote Christ and the money changers in the temple.". No sooner had I said it than out came just that example which exactly illustrates the non-violent thesis. For if there ever was a case of what the advocate of non-violence calls spiritual power, then it is found in the story of a man who picks up a bundle of small cords and with this ferocious weapon drives a great temple courtyard full of tradesmen, herdsmen and money changers out into the street. Obviously, they went not because they were not powerful enough to resist him and his whip of small cords, but because they were ashamed by the vigour of his personality and the truth of his words. No; no unprejudiced person who reads the gospel story can regard Christ as an advocate of violence. What they can say is that he was a mystic who laid down certain principles which they cannot consider applicable to present conditions, or that he is a divine personality on whose miraculous life and death a fallible Church has been founded, and that a Christian is one who accepts the teaching of this Church because of the truth it embodies and the social and individual value of its authoritative guidance. But a judge on a tribunal of conscientious objectors who does not understand that a man may reasonably be an individual follower of the original teaching of Christ, or a B.B.C. commentator who commits so elementary an error, are surely both wrongly chosen for their positions.

* * *

A correspondent writes: it was easy for us of the post-war generation to make fun of Hal Fisher. His writing, his conversation, even his gestures were so stylised that the young critic could take off the mannerisms and believe that he had described the man. Any Oxford man will recognise a story which begins—either in French or in English—with the words, "When I was in the Cabinet." Those who knew him well, however, realised that behind this curiously bleak exterior formality, Fisher concealed a subtle sense of humour and a streak of intellectual passion. He laughed at his own mannerisms: he preserved them out of a real sense of style. For Fisher, both as historian and politician, was a follower of Voltaire, who recognised the sharp distinction between Liberalism and Democracy. He admired parliamentary institutions not as the mouthpiece of the people but as the civilised instrument of government by a ruling class, too wise either to be despotic or subservient to popular passion. His golden age was the parliamentarism of the eighteenth century, his aim as President of the Board of Education to abolish the tyranny of the majority by training the lower classes to accept the aristocratic tradition. Like Morley, he was a Whig who despised stupidity in the ruler and enthusiasm in the subject. Unlike Morley, he lived to see the age of reason end and the age of unreason take its place. That is what gave his *History of Europe* its enduring value. It may not contain references to the latest sources—Fisher was refreshingly free from this snobbery of modern historians—but it was all of a piece, the single-minded expression of a precise and elegant philosophy of life, written by a man who had been both an actor and a spectator on the stage of history and recognised that his act in the drama was over. His devotion to Lloyd George, in whose Cabinet he served, was that of a rationalist who understood the need for romance: his hatred for Christian Science that of a sceptic who despised high-falutin' superstition. Let those who think Fisher humourless read his attack on Mrs. Baker Eddy in *Our New Religion*. He concludes a description of a testimony meeting with the words, "The audience streamed out into the roar and battle of London, to banish the false belief of an appetite by the unreal and unnecessary phantom of a lunch." A man who not only wrote but talked in that way made a Warden whom New College men will never forget.

* * *

Referring to the changed format of this journal, a friend writes to say that he is sorry to hear the margins of our pages are being reduced: "the paper is, I'm told, read for its margins."

* * *

The same friend asked a bootblack if after the Budget he was going to give up beer. "No," said the bootblack, "I shall drink it more slowly."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to F. R. Frost.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

"I fear that our workmen, in their eagerness to fight against what they believe to be capitalistic principles of management, forget what in fact they should be fighting for, namely the protection of their own homes and livelihood. . . ." The Chairman said that the demand for anthracite was good, prices were satisfactory, and, barring unforeseen circumstances, if their workmen would only give better output the company would be able to pay a much better dividend.—Report of an annual meeting in the *Evening Post*, Swansea.

For political reasons we have to have an alliance with the French, but that makes it only the more necessary to watch that no French habits or French morals are allowed to creep in here.—A letter in *The Tribune*.

Membership is strictly limited as to numbers, so there is no fear that it will ever be overcrowded, or that uncongenial spirits or persons of a low class will ever bring a jarring note into the Club. . . . The Abbey Club meets the needs of those who hitherto have been deterred from joining a Naturist Club by the fear that they may find as fellow-members some humble employee, the butcher, baker, grocer or the insurance man. Not that there is anything snobbish about the Club.—*The Naturist*.

Nudist Shows.—Dr. Warman calls for watchfulness.—*Manchester Guardian.*

The directors of large companies often prefer public school and university men, because if they are of the right sort they will do their best for the company; there is no trade union spirit among them. It is sometimes said that they are more successful in managing their subordinates than the former board-school boy. . . .

In Germany the middle class have been proletarianised, and an educated proletariat is a social danger. There are very few Germans now who have as much as £2,000 a year.—Dean Inge in the *Evening Standard.*

THAT GERMANY

Germany Explains to Scandinavia

Everyone in Germany is really sorry that German troops in Norway have been compelled by Norwegian resistance to use force against members of a nation whom we really esteem and to whom we feel closely bound. It would have been far preferable to us all if the minor incidents which occurred in the advance into Denmark could have been avoided. That Scandinavians should shoot on Germans and Germans on Scandinavians offends our deepest feelings. . . .

Whether it were Germany or Britain that had occupied Norway it was surely a mistake, once the deed was done, to organise resistance which could anyway only be a partial resistance, and to carry it on under desperate conditions, especially as in our particular case Germany has offered a guarantee that she has no aim except to prevent aggression by others, that is, that she only desires to provide protection to the Norwegian coast against Anglo-French attacks. . . . In brief, the weakness of Norway was dangerous; that was the decisive fact.—*Frankfürter Zeitung*, April 14th, 1940.

An Alternative Explanation

As was only to be expected, the Danes and Norwegians recognised the chivalry and discipline of the German troops. Our soldiers in the North are ambassadors of Germanism. We frankly admit that many Danes and Norwegians are at heart more in sympathy with the British and French than with us, and for that reason have an open ear for advice from London and Paris. No doubt we shall have to deal in future with many of these people who are devoted adherents of the Western democracies. They will follow the example of Hambro and leave the country.—*Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, April 12th, 1940.

Alfred Rosenberg on War Aims

Germany has taken up the struggle not only for itself. Germany has become the protector of the threatened and oppressed European continent. She fights to-day against a damnable dismemberment of the old splendid European continent into dozens of little States, exposed without scruple to blockade, hunger and destruction by the British. Germany's struggle is really a living comradeship of all the European States. . . .

Against the dictate of Versailles, Germany has written upon her banner the right of self-determination of the peoples. She fights to-day not only for her own right of self-determination, but for the whole European continent against the bandit speculators of the world.—*Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 17th, 1940.

Nordic Divorce

The new marriage law means that in future the decisive factor in the termination of broken and therefore worthless marriages is the common weal, that is, the interests of the people as a whole. This means the end of the idea that the termination or the continuance of the marriage should be determined by considerations of reward or punishment for either husband or wife, or for third parties who have disturbed the marriage. The decision of the Supreme Court in a recent case stresses that the needs of public policy are to be the determining factor.—*Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, April 10th, 1940.

PAPER-ERSATZ?

[The author of this article is a leading British expert on paper-making and allied subjects. He has written two important books on Wood Pulp and on the chemical problems connected with the preservation of books and documents.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

IN two recent Government Orders the supply of paper (other than for Government purposes, for export, or under licence) was first cut down to 60 per cent. of pre-war requirements; then a few days after Germany attacked Norway, a further cut of 50 per cent. was made, so that the ration of paper for everyday uses is now equivalent to less than one-third of the pre-war consumption.

Paper is made from cellulose pulp, which is the fibrous "skeleton" of a number of plants, the most important of these being trees. This country imports practically all its requirements of such paper-making materials, namely about 2½ million tons per annum. Of this 80 per cent. is derived from tree-wood in one form or other, and most of it comes normally from Scandinavia and from Finland in particular. With the Baltic sealed and Norway and its coast a battleground, it is obviously unwise at the moment to rely too much on this source of supplies. Esparto grass from French North Africa normally accounts for another 17.5 per cent.; actually, however, owing to difficulties with shipping facilities esparto imports have fallen to a fraction of this figure since the war, and future prospects in the Mediterranean do not encourage the hope that the position will greatly improve. The remaining 2.5 per cent. consists of rags and what official statisticians call "other materials," and for our present purpose is negligible.

What steps can be taken to deal with this situation? There is first the welcome possibility of an Allied victory in Norway, which will reopen this trade route and at least restore us to the position in which we were situated at the beginning of April. Secondly, stocks of finished paper are certainly considerable, and if these are distributed judicially over the coming months, even assuming the worst, the shortage will not become acute just yet. The collection of waste paper for reutilisation has already received a good deal of publicity. Paper, however, cannot be reused indefinitely, and we have to prepare for a more distant future. One of our principal hopes for supplies rests on Canada, because Canada is both able and willing to provide an increasingly larger proportion of our wood pulp requirements. On the other hand, she has a close and friendly neighbour, the United States, which is dependent on Canada for over 8 per cent. and on Scandinavia for over 17 per cent. of her wood pulp requirements; the former is equivalent to about 650,000 tons per annum, that is about three-quarters of Canada's pulp exports. The question is, therefore, can the Canadian pulp mills speed up their output in such a short time so as to replace Scandinavian supplies?

The next possibility to be considered is the use in this country of home-grown trees. This was in fact done during the last war, but it has several serious drawbacks. First, there are the rival claims of the industries which use timber for constructional purposes, and which themselves are suffering from events in Northern Europe. Secondly, there is the lack of suitable equipment for converting the wood into cellulose pulp; and thirdly, the fact that many of our indigenous trees are not altogether suitable for the purpose, and that forests, already inadequate, cannot be grown at a moment's notice to replace those that are cut down. In a long war the resources of modern technology would doubtless succeed in overcoming some of these difficulties, but the project must be dismissed as a complete and immediate solution to the problem.

It seems, therefore, that we must next consider substitutes for wood as a source of cellulose fibres. Such substitutes are not lacking; in fact well over 2,000 of them have been investigated since it was realised some 150 years ago that the future paper requirements of the world could never be satisfied by rags alone. Such substitutes have included materials as varied as wasps' nests, manure, nettle stalks, grass and peat, and they have successively raised and destroyed the hopes of almost as many inventors and their financial backers. The point is that all of these materials can be made into paper, some more successfully than others, but that this is not the only requirement of a paper-making fibre. It is significant in fact that in spite of this apparent abundance of paper-making materials, wood pulp still accounts for over 90 per cent. of the paper made in the world. The failures are usually due to questions of yield, rate of growth (for replacements), and most important of all the ease of harvesting, collection and transport. Some of the substitutes have been able to satisfy all these requirements, but only by becoming of localised importance, the pulp and paper being made in the district where the plant is grown. Examples are bamboo in India, hemp stalks in Italy (where some 400,000 tons, which would otherwise be wasted, are available annually), straw (in agricultural countries such as Holland), sugar bagasse in Hawaii, delta grass in the Danube valley, and so on.

Several possibilities of this nature are applicable to our present position, and of these straw is by far the most important. It grows quickly, and in quantities which in view of the present land policy (aided possibly by modern fertiliser research) should become increasingly large; it is easily harvested, and can be stored without deterioration; and if suitably processed it can be made into paper pulp which blends well with the other paper fibres at present available. Certain types of existing pulp-making plant may, moreover, with a little technical ingenuity, be adapted to deal with it; in fact within two weeks of the outbreak of war paper of reasonably good quality and containing a high proportion of straw was being made in this country.

Other alternatives are the reeds which are such a familiar feature of the Norfolk landscape; potato and tomato haulms, which have

already been exploited for the same purpose in Germany although, it seems, as a compliment to the Fuhrer's *penchant* for the former vegetable; and nettles and bracken, which present certain obvious harvesting difficulties! Attempts to use certain of these were made during the last war, but the resulting papers even when judged by wartime standards could not be regarded as very successful—except perhaps as wrappings. Considerable technical strides have, however, been made since then, and if the position becomes at all acute necessity may force us to create a pulp industry which will probably serve us in good stead when the war is over.

Finally, the possibility of a substitute for paper itself is one which must not be entirely dismissed, in an age in which science is continually achieving the apparently impossible. Suggestions of this nature have in fact been made from time to time, although they have usually had as their object the production of an "everlasting" substitute for paper for the preservation of valuable documents. They include photographic records on glass plates (photographic films being derived from cellulose), engravings on stone, and the burning of written characters into the glaze of pottery. Printing with a platinum "ink" on thin sheets of gold has also been used, for instance, to record an important speech by King George V! These may have their possibilities, but they hardly solve the problem of the daily newspaper or business letter.

A material known as Alsifilm is the latest-comer to this field, and one which is of considerable interest, although still far from being the perfect paper *ersatz*. If suitably processed and carefully dried, certain American clays can be spread out in thin layers and persuaded to form coherent and self-supporting sheets or films. These films may be made flexible and crease-proof, they can be dyed and rendered either transparent or opaque, and they print well, especially by the rotogravure process. Since they may be made resistent to oil and are good insulators, they also have many possibilities outside the paper-using industries. One important respect in which they are inferior to paper is in strength, and in particular in resistance to tearing. Since the best method of overcoming this drawback is to add paper fibres, so that these interweave with and reinforce the clay film, it seems that even this possible substitute is not entirely independent of paper. It is suggested that certain English clays which resemble the American variety may have the same qualities, but I gather that no experiments have yet been made. All one can say is that it is always possible that the laboratory curiosity of to-day may be the new industry of to-morrow, and that Alsifilm is worthy of inclusion in this category even if it does not seem likely to provide us with the solution of our present paper problems. JULIUS GRANT

O GOD! O WASHINGTON!

(After Samuel Butler)

"The German record . . . makes neutrality not merely difficult for Americans but shameful as well."—Westbrook Pegler, U.S. columnist.

Far away in the United States of America
The isolationists bury their heads in the sand, saying:
"The belligerents are six of one and half-a-dozen of the other,
But great is the Monroe Doctrine, rich the blessings of abstract neutrality,"
O God! O Washington!

Neutral through thick and thin in the old brave battle for freedom
They voted credits to Finland solely for agricultural implements
While trading arms to all comers on a cash-and-carry basis
That they might be without reproach in the sight of the aggressors.
O God! O Washington!

And the voice of reason crieth to the isolationists, saying:
Ye who prefer the gabble of Goebbels to the gospel of freedom,
When Britain is Hitler's doormat and France Mussolini's cuspidor
Think ye to escape a kick on your large white naked posteriors?
O God! O Washington!

But the voice of reason falleth unheard on the isolationists' posteriors
The elevation of which blasphemes the principles of democracy.
Geese, once saved Rome but the ostriches of the Capitol will not save America.
O Thomas Jefferson! O Walt Whitman! O Henry James!
O President Roosevelt!
O Washington! O God!

SAGITTARIUS

GIVING AND GIVING UP

I CONFESS I was not only astonished but slightly shocked when I read in the *News Chronicle* that, according to the estimate of the British Institute of Public Opinion, one person in six had given up smoking since the beginning of the war. I have myself again and again both by word and by deed given proof of my sincerity as an advocate of abstinence from tobacco; but that was in peacetime when nothing seemed to matter much. In peacetime one can give up smoking without a twinge of conscience — without an uneasy feeling that it is one's neighbours who in the end will have to pay for one's experiment in virtue. In a sense, of course, everyone who abstains from tobacco does so at the expense of his neighbours. Someone has to foot the bill presented every year by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and, if you refuse to pay your share by smoking, the money you save must be provided by other people. In peacetime, however, taxation is comparatively light, and the State does not seem to need your money so much. As a result, you can even take a certain pride in becoming a non-smoker.

To-day, however, all this is changed. You can now take pride only in being a smoker, and the heavier the smoker the better. With every packet of cigarettes you smoke, you know you are making a substantial contribution to the national income during a period of crisis. Think of all those extra twopences you have been throwing into the common purse since September last. Now your twopences will be fivepences. As you go on smoking, you will become more and more an altruist. You will be proving yourself a good neighbour —a man who does not shrink from assuming his share of the general burden. In Russia they have a fine system—called I think, Stakhanovism—for encouraging public spirit in the factories, and the worker who shows the greatest output is honoured as a good citizen. It would be a fine thing, I think, if the Government instituted a Stakhanovite ribbon for smokers, recognising that they, too, in their humble way are good citizens. If this ribbon were given to everyone who smoked an ounce of pipe tobacco or forty cigarettes—some people would like to raise the number to sixty—a day, we should soon find a brisk rivalry going on among smokers to belong to this new legion of honour.

It is quite easy, it should be remembered, to persuade people to oversmoke. Some years ago 50 per cent. of Englishmen were over-smoking in order to collect enough coupons from cigarette-packets to enable their wives to obtain free teapots, jam dishes, épergnes, and all sorts of domestic furniture. I have known a man to oversmoke merely in order to complete his child's collection of a motor-car series of cigarette pictures. How much greater would the impulse to oversmoke be if a cigarette constantly between the lips came to be regarded as a badge of honour!

I write this, not as one who believes that smoking is a good thing, but as one who believes that in normal times smoking is a rather bad thing. If tobacco were duty-free at the present moment, I would advise everybody to give up smoking. Even if the duty were only a light one, I should be inclined to urge abstinence. As the duty becomes heavier, however, it imposes a duty on us as well as on the tobacco. How can we decently attempt to evade either duty at a time like this? I can easily understand a hitherto non-smoking man of principle's being tempted to turn smoker and so play the part of an honourable citizen.

There is one great charm about taxes such as the tobacco tax. Paying them is purely voluntary. No one compels us to smoke. If we abstain from smoking, girls do not go round presenting us with white feathers or other humiliating emblems. To smoke or not to smoke is left to our consciences. Now the objection to many taxes is their compulsory nature. That is why most people hate Income Tax. Many of them would pay it gladly if they were not forced to pay it. Compulsion, however, seems to them an infringement of their liberty, with the result that even normally honest men pay large sums to solicitors to show them how to avoid paying what they owe. Whether it would be possible to have an entirely voluntary system of taxation, I do not know. If I remember right—but probably I do not—Sir Alfred Zimmern in *The Greek Commonwealth* describes a voluntary system of taxation in ancient Athens. It is difficult to imagine such a system's working in England. At the same time, it seems to me that a wise Chancellor of the Exchequer will make his taxation system as voluntary as possible.

That is why I approve of Sir John Simon's taxes on tobacco, whisky, and beer, and his increase in the price of postage and telephone calls. I only wish that he had added a few more things so that

non-smokers and teetotallers would also have had a chance of making large voluntary contributions to the revenue. As a whisky drinker, I am particularly grateful to him for his increase in the duty on whisky. If whisky had continued at its old price of 3*s.* 6*d.* a bottle—its price when I first came to England—I should be doing very little service to the State by drinking it. Drinking it, indeed, would be mainly self-indulgence. Now that it has gone up to 16*s.* a bottle, however, only a small fraction of my drinking is self-indulgence. At least, three-quarters of it is pure voluntary tax-paying. I doubt whether anyone but the whisky drinker pays of his own free will a tax on anything like the same scale. There are temperance advocates who deplore the amount of money that is spent on whisky, but the figures they quote—rather misleadingly—include the enormous taxation paid as well as the comparatively small amount of money the distillers would charge if whisky were duty free. Most of the money said to be spent on whisky is no more spent on whisky than the Income Tax is spent on whisky. It is spent on education and a vast number of other national services. I myself have a leaning towards teetotalism, but I cannot blind myself to the fact that, if I were a teetotaller, I should be of much less use to the State as a voluntary taxpayer. Have we any more right, I sometimes wonder, to evade taxes that are voluntary than to evade taxes that are compulsory? Is the tobacco-tax-dodger or the whisky-tax-dodger superior from a strictly moral point of view to the Income-Tax-dodger? The whisky drinker, it seems to me, is in a strong position. "Lend to Defend," etc., says the State to him. The whisky drinker replies: "I do not lend. I give."

I could not help thinking, as I listened to Sir John Simon explaining his Budget on the wireless, that he made a mistake in not appealing to his listeners to devote as much of their expenditure as possible to the articles that are taxed most highly. I hoped to hear from him, for example, an urgent request to make more use of the telephone. After all, the people who already ring one up needlessly at all hours could ring one up twice as often. Tell a telephone-fiend that by telephoning he—or she—is helping to win the war, and he—or she—will set to work at the dial with redoubled vigour. I am half sorry, indeed, that Sir John has increased the charge for telephone calls. There have always been nine-and-ninety reasons for telephoning; and now patriotism has been added to them.

The increase in the cost of postage is another feature of the Budget that I half regret. It will encourage patriotic people to write more letters; and that will mean an added burden to many of us since, for some reason that I have never been able to understand, people who write letters expect to have their letters answered. My only consolation in the circumstances is that, if I find myself absolutely compelled to answer a letter, there will be more pleasure in writing a 2½*d.* letter than there has hitherto been in writing a 1½*d.* letter. Paying 2½*d.* for a stamp will make one forget the pains of letter-writing in the joy of being a philanthropist. If to give is more blessed than to receive, we are certainly living in a blessed era.

I cannot help wishing, indeed, that Sir John had cast his net wider. He has left so many of our pleasures untouched. Patriotic women must resent in particular his failure to put a thumping tax on cosmetics. To disfigure the face prettily has long been a source of gratification among women; but a heavy tax would for the first time have afforded a moral reason for the disfigurement. For my own sake, again, I should like there to have been a tax on taxis. One could ride in taxis with a good conscience if the fare were raised to two shillings a mile, one-and-threepence of this going to the Treasury.

Patent medicines, again—swallowing which probably does more to cheer human beings up than anything else except sport—might well have been made the object of heavy taxation. I found myself swallowing four different kinds the other day, and enjoyed every one of them; and, what is more, none of them seemed to do me the slightest harm. There is a high imaginative pleasure in swallowing a dose of vitamin A and in thinking that one is absorbing the equivalent of all the butter and all the carrots one has never eaten. I am sure that many of us would be glad in these days to show our gratitude by paying more for our patent medicines. And I doubt whether an increase in their price through taxation would lead to even one person in six's giving them up. We patent-medicine-swallowers are a dogged race, not easily separated from our bottles.

Still, in spite of a few flaws in his Budget, Sir John has done fairly well. He has counselled us not to spend money, and has at the same time given us some excellent reasons for spending the money that he has left us on the things we like best. The extra tax on tobacco was a stroke of genius. What honest man could now dream of giving up smoking till the war is over? Y. Y.

COUNTRY NOTES

Surprises

AMONG the minor pleasures of life, doubly precious just now, is the habit that some plants have of appearing in unexpected places. Thus the starry blue anemone of the Apennines crops up in patches among the grass of the English orchard when it was really intended to remain sharing a border with the bulbs of early spring. There is something particularly satisfying in the union of blue and green, colours that compliment (I purposely do not write complement) one another, each courteously drawing out a quality from the other, the green making the blue seem brighter, the blue emphasising the extreme greenness of the young grass. A pity that Marvell never had the opportunity of observing this; it would surely have pleased him, but probably they never grew *Anemone apennina* or *Scilla sibirica* at Appleton House. Not that the Apennine anemone is very bright in its blueness; it holds more of the powder-blue loved by the Chinese and by Nattier; but *Scilla sibirica* in its blueness rivals the vernal gentian. Grown in grass, it excels in intensity of colour its companions grown in the plain brown soil. Blue and brown do not compliment one another. Blue and grey, on the other hand, do; and I observe that a well-established pool of scillas will, in the course of years, travel gradually across a stone-paved path between the cracks of the paving in a little tide of advancing blue runnels, where no gardener however imaginative and optimistic would think of planting them. Nature has ideas of her own, which put ours to shame. The little lavender crocus, *Tomasianus*, is another wanderer, and some of the finest lilies of the valley I have ever seen (reputed to exact a rich soil and cool conditions) had spread themselves all over a cindered path in the full glare of the summer sun. To continue, the common rosemary will seed itself of its own accord in situations it would never have accepted for a moment at our desire. I have two strong young rosemarys growing out of a solid brick wall, in the chinks of the mortar; and by the way it is worth noting that these two are the healthiest survivors of their family after this wicked winter. Clearly, the reason is that neither frost nor damp could penetrate the wall to their roots, so the protection of the masonry replaced the protection of stone and boulder on their native Mediterranean hills. This shows the good sense of the seedlings in choosing that dry inhospitable spot. There are many legends connected with rosemary, but the one which consoles me best for the losses of this winter is the one which tells me that rosemary can never grow taller than Christ in His term here below: after thirty-three years, it is said, it ceases to gain height and begins to spread sideways. I forget where I learnt this fact, but I try to derive a philosophical comfort from it as I contemplate the dead brown bushes which have failed me long before their three-and-thirty years were achieved.

The wild flowers share this pleasing trick of gate-crashing with the imported foreigners. Just now the woods are blowing with our native wind-flower, the white anemone, which is sometimes pink, and which blows itself freely into corners of the garden. I should never have thought of planting it deliberately; particularly not in the corners it has chosen for itself. It has a taste for its location which I must recognise as being better than mine. I should never have thought of placing it at the foot of pleached limes, but it is perfectly in accordance there where it has set itself, flowering before the limes have come into leaf. There is a pure stark nakedness about the white flower which perfectly matches the nakedness of the lime-branches overhead. The early flower and the belated leaf—there is a sort of mystical communion between them which I accept but find hard to explain. This sense of communion and suitability happens so often in Nature that the lover of Nature must recognise it as a fact without trying to explain it away. It just exists; it *is*. Like Faith, it is not to be argued; either it is to be accepted or rejected, and he who rejects it is the poorer for the rejection.

War Anecdote

These considerations lead me back from the haphazard arrangements of Nature to one of the most charming tiny stories which comes out of the war. A public building in a south-coast town ran out of its sand-supply for its sand-bags; it therefore authorised its willing helpers to obtain sand or soil wherever available, even from the public garden if need be. Sacks were filled and stacked up, and no questions asked. They stood there, sturdily and soddenly protecting the walls and windows throughout the winter. But with the spring came a change. Green shoots began to appear through cracks of the sacking, and now the whole grim barricade blows with yellow daffodils. V. SACKVILLE-WEST

SIMON AND THE PLAN

Sir John is not the kind of man
To smile on Mr. Keynes's plan.
He far prefers the suave effect
Of taxes that are indirect
And more expensive postage which
Falls equally on poor and rich.
Since there is nothing quite so nice
As equal shares of sacrifice,
Sir John dropped Mr. Keynes's plan
In justice to the working-man.

N. M.

WHAT YOU HEAR

My last article produced an interesting effect, a perfect Colonel Blimp letter about my remarks on Maurice Healy. Lieutenant-Colonel (R.A.) wrote to me from the United Services Club:

> "To say that he 'talks about the "working man" as if he were a primitive tribe' is simply an abuse of the English language. In what other words would you suggest that he should express his meaning?"

That puts it very nicely from the Pall Mall end. And I think that too many people in the B.B.C. find it difficult to think in any other way. It is not only Maurice Healy who thinks of the labourer as an aborigine. Twice in the past week I have heard, for instance, a lady called Suzette Tarri pretending to be a charlady. The B.B.C. are very keen on this act and recently wrote it up in the *Radio Times*. She puts on a whining, wavering imitation working-class voice. She is middle-aged and she cannot get anyone to marry her; her fiancé goes to bed in his spectacles and cannot give her a ring till her chilblains are better—he has only had one job in years, and was sacked the first day. She won £5 at a local bazaar, in the "funny make-up" competition, which was strange because she only came to look on. The lodgers in the boarding house where she works never have a good word for her. They sent her half a mile to post a letter. Out of her savings she has bought five vacuum cleaners, because she is bewitched by the salesmen, the last of which called her Carole Lombard. On April 12th she started off by telling us "this spring weather fair makes your sap rise, doesn't it?" And on April 20th she said: "I always have to keep an eye on myself in the spring," because she found her sap rising so. Perhaps I am unduly sensitive; I suppose someone must like this sort of thing.

The B.B.C. are obsessed with the charlady, presumably because she is the only working-class person their producers and writers meet. The other day they had a programme called "Cheery Charing," where Suzette Tarri, playing the part of Mrs. Gusset, was addressed by her employer in much the same way that Maurice Healy speaks of working people in his Sunday postscripts.

To a large section of these intelligent young men, piled neatly one above another in Broadcasting House, the working class is something strange, stupid, economically and sexually unsuccessful, something very animal in which the sap rises in spring. They produce regular stereotypes of workers, and these stereos are poured out week after week through innumerable wireless sets into innumerable middle- and upper-class homes. I wonder if the effect may not be to increase class consciousness and to widen the gulf of misunderstanding between different sections of the community. Very seldom do we hear on the wireless any genuine expression of the feelings, actions and ideas of that enormous majority of the population which left school at 14. And since Miss Olive Shapley married one of the staff and thus became debarred from carrying on as programme producer, this undersupply of genuine reportage has further declined. There is now nobody on the staff except D. G. Bridson who really combines the touch of ordinary people and the genius of radio. Stephen Potter's programmes are brilliant; think of his "escape of the submarine *Ortzel*." But he understands best at the level of the officer (he was in the Guards himself) and the intellectual artisan (he was a W.E.A. tutor).

All this was borne home on me vividly on St. George's Day, when, like some oasis in the arid sands of months, I heard a programme which was genuinely "representative" of "the people." Rightly the B.B.C regarded this day as an opportunity to put across the real core of England; and fortunately they gave the job to Bridson as producer, with J. B. Priestley as compere and writer. Priestley's pleasant Yorkshire accent and common sense gave a genuine flavour to the words which linked the recordings of working people in Durham and on Tyneside, in Lincoln and Bradford and Lancs. The material had no particular continuity—a relief to hear a programme that hadn't—it simply left England to talk to itself. And at the end Priestley talked to England, gently but forcibly, telling us that, after the war was over, we must at last face up to our own problems, especially the hideous squalor of Victorian industrialism which has overwhelmed large areas of our earth, unrelieved by park or beauty, "like an evil dream." The best programme I have heard this year.

From J. B. Priestley to William Shakespeare is a longish jump, but an English one. For generations Shakespeare has been the subject of a vaguely universal respect in Britain. Last week Shakespeare was brought up to date in a show called "New Faces." Arthur Young, highly educated and intelligent like most jazz writers in this country, is responsible for swinging four of Shakespeare's love lyrics, including "Oh Mistress Mine," "Sigh No More, Ladies." These four tunes, with Shakespeare's unaltered words sung to them, impress me enormously and against my will. Not only are the words contemporary—so contemporary in spirit that they make the war seem insignificant against the static background of British sentiment—but they are perfect "swing" (if swing is perfect!). As one of the brightest men in the dance music business remarked to me: "Until now people have heard of Shakespeare but they don't know what the heck it's all about. I think this will carry Shakespeare to everyone. Do them good."

MONITOR

THE MOVIES

"Gone with the Wind," at the Palace, Empire and Ritz.
"La Marseillaise," at the Academy.
"Ils Etaient Neuf Célibataires," Studio One.

Gone with the Wind is a film to make D. W. Griffiths green in his grave and Cecil B. de Mille look to his gilded crown. An epic of the Old South during the civil war, running time three hours and forty minutes, expense account in astral figures, photographed throughout in Technicolor, moreover giving painless birth to a new star—it will be a hard and expensive task to surpass this gargantuan production. Miss Margaret Mitchell's novel swept America like an epidemic; the search for a suitable actress to play the heroine, Scarlett O'Hara, provided front-page Hollywood news for a year; after so much publicity and brouhaha it was difficult indeed for the producers not to bring forth a mouse. Luckily Miss Mitchell, though her prose was indifferent, was profligate of plot and action, and provided a story ideal for such extravagance. The first half of the picture is utterly absorbing: it is possible to ignore the strange vagaries of Technicolor (the livid sky, the greenish light which flickers inconsequentially across features if they are painted any other shade but brick red) and the hackneyed characterisation, in the fascination of watching the customs of the Old South so prettily described, of observing Vivien Leigh's lively and capable performance, and of gaping at the violent realism of the war sequences. It is amazing how completely this film has abandoned polite cinematic convention; if any of the ladies are ill they look ill, if they go out in a storm their hair goes straight, the sequences in a hospital at Atlanta are brutally life-like, and a scene in which Miss Leigh shoots a Yankee soldier in the face exceeds the conventional bounds of realism. The second half of the picture develops the character of the heroine, and deals off-hand with life in the South after the war; there is too much of birth, death and a tedious marriage, and, as the characters throughout are little more than types, the interest is not sustained. Nevertheless, Miss Leigh continues to delight and there are some beautiful scenes and costumes. The enormous cast includes Clark Gable, Leslie Howard, and Olivia de Havilland, but it is exclusively Miss Leigh's film. It is doubtful if *Gone with the Wind* will have the same success in England as it is having in America; the English are not addicts, as are the Americans, of the cinema, and, like an overdose of cocaine to the novice, a visit to the film will probably result not in exhilaration but in complete anaesthesia.

Jean Renoir in his film of the French Revolution, *La Marseillaise*, has used a technique derived from the Russian film—diffuse, documentary, dealing with the crowd rather than with personalities. It is high time to break with the Baroness Orczy tradition of French revolutionary films, but it is unfortunate that Jean Renoir whose handling of character is so infinitely subtle should, in telling a story panoramically, deprive himself of his best asset. All dramatic device has been abandoned, and the Revolution is shown as it was—a slow irresistible seizure of power by the bourgeoisie. There is a magnificent and dramatic scene of the storming of the Tuilleries, and a brilliant sketch of the misunderstanding King by Pierre Renoir. This is a laudable effort by a brilliant director working out of his proper medium.

Sacha Guitry is the only man to have introduced to the cinema the personal atmosphere of the theatre. Both by his acting and his production he has established an intimacy with his audiences which enhances the appeal of his charming humour. *Ils Etaient Neuf Célibataires* is perfect material for his technique—slight, witty, and thoroughly French in the English sense. Monsieur Guitry remains histrionically in the background, but he is always present, providing entertainment with the assistance of Elvire Popesco and a brilliant cast, which is well up to Guitry standards.

ANTHONY BOWER

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, April 27th—
Barbara Wootton: "Federal Union," 12 Gt. Newport Street, 6.
SUNDAY, April 28th—
Prof. M. Polanyi: "Social Action by Plan or by Principles," Conway Hall, 11. Concert, 6.30.
Rabbi Dr. Mattuck: "The Faith of a Modern Jew," Liberal Jewish Synagogue, St. John's Wood, 11.15.
Labour Party Pacifist Fellowship General Meeting, Friends House, 3.
MONDAY, April 29th—
John Piper: "Cubism—Cézanne, Picasso, Braque," Morley College, 7.30.
H. S. L. Polak: "India and the Future," 12 Gt. Newport Street, 7.45.
TUESDAY, April 30th—
J. Q. Henriques: "Facing the Facts—What Is Wrong with Our Social Services?" Housing Centre, 1.
Roger Gibb: "The Problem of Railway Charges," Canterbury Hall, Cartwright Gardens, W.C.1, 5.
"Give Us This Day," Torch.
WEDNESDAY, May 1st—
Sir Richard Acland: "My Attitude Towards Federal Union," "The Falstaff," 1.
M. Genissieux: "L'Allemagne vue par un Français," Institut Français, 5.
M. Maheu: "Chronique de la Quinzaine," Institut Français, 5.30. And every Wednesday fortnight until June 26th.
Fabian May Day Dance, Burlington Galleries, 7.30.
Kundan Lawl Jalie: "Mahatma Gandhi and India," Dick Sheppard Centre, 8.
Rt. Rev. David Mathew: "Federation and the National Traditions," 101 Piccadilly, W.1, 8.45.
"Peril at End House," Vaudeville.
THURSDAY, May 2nd—
Hilda Ormsby: "Critical Areas in South Eastern Europe," Canterbury Hall, 5.30.
Tea-time Concert by Rosé Quartet, Queen Mary Hall, 5.30.
FRIDAY, May 3rd—
First Week-end Conference of the National Book Council, Burlington Hotel, Eastbourne. Till May 6th. Particulars 3 Henrietta Street, W.C.2.
Graham Pollard: "The Provincial Newspaper," Birkbeck College, 5.30.

Correspondence

THE DAILY WORKER AND THE WAR

SIR,—It is necessary for those who do not accept the attitude expressed by the *Daily Worker* to the German invasion of Scandinavia to disassociate themselves from that attitude.

On Tuesday, April 9th, the day before the invasion, the *Daily Worker* expressed the view that the laying of mines by the British in Norwegian territorial waters "does not directly harm Germany in a military sense—that indeed is obviously directed rather towards the general domination of Scandinavian policy by the Western Powers, with the principal idea of directing it against Russia." Hence there were indications "that the German Government may after all prefer to let the situation ride for the moment . . . and act diplomatically rather than militarily."

But after the German invasion, in the issue of April 13th, Frank Pitcairn wrote: "Everyone knew that if Britain invaded Norwegian territorial waters with minefields the Germans would respond with counter action. Nobody is fool enough to suppose that they would not."

The contradiction, though extreme, is not in itself particularly important. But it is decisive in the sense that it shows the nature of the argument, used by Pitcairn in the same article, and by the *Daily Worker* on every day since the German invasion of Scandinavia. The argument is that that invasion was an inevitable, easy to foresee, and in that sense justified, reply to the British violation of Norwegian waters; that the whole responsibility for the spread of the war to Scandinavia, and the sufferings of the Norwegian people rested on Britain and France exclusively and not upon Germany. The passages quoted show that this argument was resorted to only after the German invasion had taken place.

The whole tenor of the *Daily Worker* during the past weeks has expressed the above view—of the exclusive guilt of Britain and France. For example, on April 10th the Diplomatic Correspondent began his article: "In a single day and night, British and French Government wrecking of Norwegian neutrality has extended the war by nearly 1,000 miles. . . . Sweden is directly threatened. There is an immediate possibility of a British and French attempt to invade that country." Neither in this article, nor (except by inference from an agency report that Oslo had surrendered) anywhere else on the front page of this issue of the *Daily Worker*, is it possible to discover that the German Government had taken the slightest part in any attack on Scandinavia. It is literally true that someone who, on April 10th, took no other newspaper but the *Daily Worker* would have been unable to discover that on the previous day the German Army had invaded Denmark and Norway. (Unless he could guess it from a phrase in the leading article. "The German Imperialists struck back immediately.")

It is true that on subsequent days the *Daily Worker* inferred that German forces were in Norway, as, for example, on April 11th, with the headline "British attempt to take Narvik Repulsed." Since then, too, the German invasion has been, by inference, repeatedly referred to and justified, by the argument that it was the British who first broke international law by laying the minefield. But no attempt, even, has been made to answer the obvious retort that, if we are to play the not very profitable game of asking "who began it?" why should we fail to mention the far more violent breach of international law which the German Imperialists have been committing, in respect of Norway, since the beginning of the war, in the form of sinking 50 Norwegian ships and drowning over 1,000 Norwegian sailors?

Examples of the apologetics for the German Imperialists into which the *Daily Worker* has fallen could be multiplied. But no one who reads, especially, the first half-dozen issues after the invasion of Norway, can possibly doubt what is the real attitude to the war of those who write and direct the newspaper. That attitude is something quite different from the characterisation of this war as an inter-imperialist war; as a war fought out, that is to say, between two rival Imperialist groups, for the familiar Imperialist purposes of a redivision of world power. With such a characterisation of the war I, for one, am in agreement. (Though, because of the special character of Fascism, I do not agree that the British workers have no interest in the question of which group of Imperialists is victorious). If, for example, the *Daily Worker*, while consenting to report the German invasion of Norway, and even perhaps permitting itself a word of sympathy with the Norwegian people, as one latest victim of Fascist aggression, had pointed out that the Germans, though by far the most obvious aggressors, were not the only people who took aggressive action; that all Imperialists, including the British and French, were aggressive; that the Norwegian people had been dragged into the war by the encroachments on their neutrality, first of one side and then of the other, I should have comprehended. But in fact the *Daily Worker's* attitude was one of apology, the more complete in some ways because tacit, for the German Imperialists; it was an attitude of apology carried, on the day after the German invasion, to the fantastic lengths of refusing to report that invasion at all.

This treatment of the German invasion of Scandinavia is no more than the culminating revelation of an attitude on the part of the *Daily Worker* which has caused many of its readers to characterise it as, not so much anti-war as simply pro-German. It is being asked on all sides how the able and sincere men who write and conduct the *Daily Worker* can have given this impression. This is, I think, the explanation. They believe that the safety of the Soviet Union is now bound up with the success of the German Government in averting defeat at the hands of the Allies; that if the Allies have any considerable growth in strength they will attack the Soviet Union.

It is this identification of the interests of the Soviet Union with the success of the German Imperialists which has, in the main, driven those responsible for the conduct of the *Daily Worker* to take their present line. It has driven them to an interpretation of Lenin's policy of revolutionary defeatism which makes it clear, in almost every line they write, that they now care nothing for the consequences of a total defeat of Britain, France, and now Norway, in this war at the hands of the Nazi Imperialists. That is what everyone who is not wilfully deceiving themselves must feel when he reads any of their pronouncements.

After a week of treating the news of the German invasion in the above manner the *Daily Worker* of April 15th, reporting the North Battersea election, wrote: "All that is needed to win them firmly for Joyce is conviction that stopping the war, which they do not want, would not mean 'giving way to Hitler.'"

Yes, that is all that is needed. But every line written in the *Daily Worker* drives me to the conviction that those controlling the *Daily Worker* are prepared, for the sake of what they consider to be the interests of the Soviet Union, to give way to Hitler to any extent, and that they are utterly irresponsible as to the consequences to the British people of such unlimited giving way. So long as that remains the case I, and, it seems, almost everybody else in the country, can have nothing to do with them, however much we, like all sane people, "do not want the war," and however much we may agree with them as to the general character of the war.

JOHN STRACHEY

SIR,—May I correct the misinterpretation of the policy of the German Communist Party which is contained in your article in the issue April 6th, as well as in the letter of Mr. Kenley published last week? By quoting only parts of an article by Walter Ulbricht (and therefore misquoting it) you inferred that the German Communist Party is primarily concerned with the struggle against British Imperialism and the agents of British Imperialism in Germany, and tends to collaborate with the Hitler Government.

Walter Ulbricht says in his article that "the struggle of the German working people against the agents of British Imperialism, against the Thyssen clique and its friends among the Social Democratic and Catholic leaders in Germany means by no means the formation of a bloc with the National Socialist regime and toleration of the suppression of Austria and Czechoslovakia. On the contrary, just this attitude demands an even more determined struggle against all imperialist strivings of the German ruling class. This imperialist policy finds its expression particularly in the national oppression of the Austrian, Czech, Slovak and Polish people. . . . The German people as well as the nations which have been incorporated in the German state of nationalities are faced with the task: to work not together with British capital for the extension of the war and a new Versailles, but with the Soviet Union for peace, for national independence and friendship of the nations."

By way of explanation it may be necessary to state the reasons why it is important for the German workers to oppose a victory of the Allies and of the political groups which support the Allies in this war, such as the Social Democrats, the Centre Party and the Thyssen clique. Having suffered the consequences of one Allied victory and realising the aims of both parties in an imperialist war, the German workers see that the real aims of the Allies are: (1) to reduce German capitalism to dependency on British capitalism; (2) to crush Germany as a nation—*il faut en finir*; (3) to prevent Germany from going socialist; and (4) to make Germany the battlefield in the fundamental struggle against socialist Soviet Russia.

This aspect of a real socialist movement may be new and somewhat hard to understand to supporters of this war, but even those who support the war should not completely misinterpret the German Communist policy (including even making the slanderous suggestion that there is an alliance between the Communists and the Nazis). It is specially important, therefore, to stress the efficient struggle conducted by the German Communists against their own imperialist Government. Some of the principal laws introduced at the outbreak of war with the aim of considerably reducing the standard of living of the German worker had to be repealed by the end of the year by various orders

(Ley on November 27th, Seldte on January 15th). These important successes of the German workers are well summarised in an article in the February number of *Inside Nazi Germany*, and it is testified by the neutral correspondent writing in the *Daily Telegraph* of March 28th that it is the Communists, utilising the pact with the Soviet Union, who are leading the movement of the workers for improved conditions. This movement is obviously the most effective struggle against the Hitler regime and the war, for it deprives the Government of means with which to wage the war and builds up the united front of the workers.

JACK GASTER

94 Baker Street, W.1.

SIR,—I wish to appeal to those rank and file members of the Communist Party with whom I worked with such harmony in Popular Front days, when, however great the difference between their philosophy of life and mine, so many of our immediate practical objectives were, or seemed to be, identical. Especially do I address those who were converted to Socialism by the Left Book Club work, and who may then or subsequently have joined the C.P.

Do they realise the way things are going?

Originally, after a short "pro-war" period, the "line" was the straight "defeatist" one—this is an imperialist war: the enemy is always at home: let each working class concentrate on attacking "its own" bourgeoisie, and the result will be an international socialist revolution. I totally disagree with this position. However great an element of imperialist rivalry there may be in this war, in *effect* it is a war for the defence of the world against fascist aggression. A Hitler victory—indeed, a failure to weaken Hitler's power to dominate and enslave—would be the end of all our hopes of progress. But while I totally disagree with the "defeatist" position, it can be understood and defended.

But C.P. policy in the various countries (and it must be seen, of course, as a co-ordinated whole) shows unmistakable signs of developing from a straight "defeatist" position into something very different.

You have already quoted an article by Ulbricht, the prominent German communist, who wrote: "Great Britain is the most reactionary force in the world." Is that attacking "his own" bourgeoisie? Is it conceivable that Liebknecht could have said anything of the kind?

In France it is alleged that leaflets are being issued by the C.P. advocating sabotage in munition factories: calling upon the workers to unite "so that *British* capitalism shall be wiped out"—not *French* capitalism, or *French, British and German* capitalism: and saying that it is the British Empire which is the real enemy and that the Führer has stretched out a loyal hand to Frenchmen. If these allegations are untrue, why, after their publication in the British press, has there apparently been no denial either of their authenticity or of their C.P. origin? And if phrases have been unfairly dragged from their context, why are we not told so?

Finally, the *Daily Worker*. Already on February 1st we were presented with the grotesquely un-Marxist argument that Chamberlain, not Hitler, was responsible for the war, because it was he that declared it: and since then there has been a rapid degeneration. In the issue of April 9th huge headlines presented our minelaying in Norwegian waters (which had just taken place) as an atrocious crime: next day, after the German invasion, that invasion was virtually unreported, and a C.P. manifesto was published which contrived to make no mention of it. And we are now told day by day that the *British* are preparing to invade (successively) Holland, Belgium and the Balkans, and that all reports of any such *German* intention are "smoke screens" to cover our own projected villainy: and (culminating grotesquerie) the *British* press is accused of having carried on a campaign of provocation against Italy since the Scandinavian invasion—the roles being just simply reversed!

Is all this concentrating on the defeat of "one's own" bourgeoisie? Is it not rather a singling out everywhere (in Germany, France and Britain) of Britain as the main enemy?

The reason is obvious. The Soviet Union, for whatever reason, inclines to Hitler Germany: then inevitably so do the Communist Parties in every country.

I submit that C.P. members should face the following questions. *If* they are sure that nothing matters but the security and power of the U.S.S.R.: *if* they are sure that the U.S.S.R. is the best judge of the measures necessary to maintain that security and increase that power: *if* they therefore consider it the duty of progressives everywhere to act on her instructions: if they would tolerate a Nazi victory in Norway and Sweden and Denmark and the Balkans and France and Great Britain, provided that Soviet policy demands it: then I have nothing further to say. Alternatively, if they are sure that, whatever the present appearances, Soviet policy will so shape itself as ultimately to secure the defeat of reaction everywhere, and in particular of Nazism, and that what she is now doing is a mere preliminary tactic, then again I have nothing further to say.

But if they feel with me that the only way to secure working class objectives is to prevent the disaster of a Hitler victory, and that in fulfilling that task it is only on ourselves that we can rely: then they will reconsider their position.

14 Henrietta Street, VICTOR GOLLANCZ
W.C.2.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

SIR,—A quotation in your "This England" column made a very neat and amusing comment on our loss of civil rights by stating that owing to the banning of a hall I was prevented from speaking on "British Liberty in Decline."

Unfortunately for the effectiveness of the point made the statement is based on a misunderstanding. In the first place, my Council, as is well known, is an independent non-party body, not associated with any party politics. It does in fact include among its members persons of all parties—Conservatives, Liberals and Socialists—and people with no political ties, who differ on most questions but are united in their determination to protect our democratic rights from infringement.

Neither I nor my Council came under any ban. I explained some time ago to the organiser that I should be unable to fulfil the engagement and I suggested a substitute, but owing to local difficulties in booking a hall the lecture was cancelled.

The National Council for Civil Liberties, RONALD KIDD, Secretary.
37, Great James Street,
Bedford Row, London, W.C.1.

[We hope no reader took our joke seriously.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

U.A.B.

SIR,—I have read with great interest both Miss Hill's book and the review on that book in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. It is a valuable book. I agree with most of its conclusions.

But I think both you and your reviewer have assumed much too lightly that the Unemployment Assistance Board "has come to stay." In the first place, if the scale were sufficient for maintenance, and (if a means test is supposed necessary) only the private income of the recipient from investments, "streets of houses," and so on been taken into account, the investigation of all ordinary cases would drop to a minimum. *Such* investigations are purely financial, and, as was done in non-contributory old age pensions, a matter for the Treasury.

But my main point is other.

The main trend of the legislation of the twentieth century was to cover the classes which had formerly received out relief from the poor law by giving them the right to a fixed money payment. That was the object of unemployment insurance, health insurance, widows pensions, old age pensions. We now see the unemployed, widows, and aged placed under a new poor law administered by a board of nominated persons; for the Assistance Board now deals with the bulk of the unemployed, and with "supplementary pensions," that is with the bulk of the two main classes of the old out relief, the "able-bodied" and the aged.

The Assistance Board consists of nominated persons. It is not under the effective control of Parliament; its rules and regulations are "laid" before Parliament, but they cannot be amended, and the express consent of Parliament is not required. Ministerial responsibility is rather vague. They are assisted by appointed local committees to advise on local conditions—the local authorities being left out of the picture; administration is in the hands of paid officers under the control of the central board.

The analogy with the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834 must present itself to everyone's mind. They too were a body of appointed persons; they too dealt very strenuously with "out relief." And I am a little comforted to think that ever since the constitution of that Board, and the end of that Board it has been held up in every text book on the art of government, as a frightful example of the wrong way to set to work.

But, leaving history alone, cannot any Labour person see, that it is absolutely contrary to all principles of democracy to entrust a service affecting so closely the very lives of the people to an irresponsible appointed board of the kind described above.

I am absolutely sure of one thing, and that is this. In the crisis of unemployment which follows a war, the "new poor law" will pass through the same stormy times that the old poor law did in 1920; and the administration of the Board, the powers of the Board, and the existence of the Board will be very fiercely challenged. This will then be a burning subject of controversy; and we had better be ready for it.

A. SUSAN LAWRENCE

THE KEYNES PLAN

SIR,—Your correspondents on the subject of the Keynes Plan seem to have overlooked a point of some importance. Principally concerned with the question "Who is to pay for the war?" they suggest various possible distributions of the burden of payment. If the question is to be discussed in these terms, almost inevitably the conclusion follows that, as the rich have not enough money to cover wartime expenditure, whatever they are unable to find must be contributed by the poor. I would like to suggest that the very terms of such an argument indicate a totally false assumption about the nature of wealth and payment. The implied assumption is that there exists in the country a fixed amount of wealth, reckoned in terms of annual income, and that this "money wealth" is the only source on which we can draw "to pay for the war." A discussion based on such an assumption must be misleading in its conclusion, and the questions it considers will be either unreal or of little value. We might as well discuss whom we are to pay for the war as how we are to pay for it.

Would it not be more profitable to consider the problem which really confronts us—how are we to produce the implements of production and destruction without which the war cannot successfully be carried on, and how are we to provide for the men who make and use those implements? In other words, how can we increase our productive capacity? It cannot be necessary to suggest the answer to that question to the readers of a Socialist periodical.

So long as Socialists discuss schemes *to raise money to pay for the war* they are playing into the hands of their political enemies: they tacitly admit to be true what they should know to be false. Wealth does not consist of money. Wealth must be reckoned in terms of goods (guns and butter), and goods can be produced only by men and machines and raw materials. We have these three prerequisites. If they were properly employed the question of who is to pay for the war would not even arise.

If the Labour Party would cease to play the part of pillars (or mere ornamental buttresses) of a capitalist economy the eventual *cost* of the war might be greatly reduced.

J. B.

Torquay,
South Devon.

ARGYLL BY-ELECTION RESULT

SIR,—It was surprising to find that your editorial comments this week contained no reference to the interesting and significant result in the Argyll by-election, where the Scottish Nationalist candidate polled more votes against the Government candidate than has been the case in any other contest since the war started.

The result, I suggest, signifies that in some areas at least of Scotland there are many people who approve of the war but distrust the present Government and have little confidence in their ability to further the causes for which the war is being fought. In Scotland we have a special interest in securing sufficient independence after the war to enable us to prevent any repetition of the ghastly aftermath of the last war and concentrate our available resources on well-planned reconstruction of the country's economy. Experience has taught us to have little hope of expecting this from Westminster. There is no doubt that this particular aspect of the Nationalist

candidate's programme made a strong appeal to an area like Argyll, so tragically neglected by absentee landed proprietors and in many other ways in need of comprehensive reconstruction.

I might add that the Nationalist candidate started from zero, with no money, no organisation and no favourable press; and on polling day he had about a quarter of his opponent's motor cars—a fact of some importance in such a scattered constituency. And lastly, he secured his poll of 7,300 odd votes (against the Government candidate's 12,300) immediately after the Norwegian invasion, amid the ensuring panic, which must have lost him fully 2,000 votes. As a leader in the Glasgow *Bulletin* said, the result is a "warning to the Government."

49 George Square, Edinburgh. ROBERT HURD

THE FREE LANCES

SIR,—The peevish article you publish by one of the Free Lances on the wartime liquidation of his group compares, if I may say so, most unfavourably with the dignity and fortitude with which the cotton towns, the North-East coast and the engineering trade everywhere faced their ten years of starvation. Manchester, for example, may have envied the gadget industries of the North Circular Road or the advertising agents of Holborn, but I defy anyone to find in ten years' files of the *Manchester Guardian* an article in which despair has turned to pettiness about the "Balfour-Campbells" or some other group more fortunate than themselves.

As for machine tool makers and engineers, surely anyone should rejoice that a group who have suffered as they have done, should now have the transitory joy of looking at their paper profits before the Chancellor of the Exchequer gathers them into the war chest. To sneer at machine tool makers alleged to be deciding to send their sons to Eton on excess profits, shows not only ignorance of the working of E.P.T. but also a degree of suburban spitefulness which could not, in the blackest years, have been found in all Durham.

I join with Mr. Keynes in giving "three cheers for Colonel Blimp and the Old School Tie" and would couple with the name of Colonel Blimp that of Albert Ramsbottam, of Oldham (who is now seeing a bit o' brass), but Mr. Freelance, of Bloomsbury—no, not till he has learnt to face disaster with the courage and dignity of Albert and his kind.

44 Berners Street, London, W.1. NEVILLE BROWN

OUR NOBLE ARMY

SIR,—In your issue of the 12th instant you printed an interesting tabulation of family, or social, rank of some of the senior women officers of the W.A.T.S. As the subject of control of this formation by society women with no technical qualifications for the job (they were originally selected by the various county Territorial Associations who made no mistakes in their choice) has caused much interest up and down the country, perhaps the following table of rates of pay (as at August 28th, 1939) of these society women will indicate something of the price the nation is paying for their patriotic services:

	Annual Rate Local Service	General Service
Chief Commandt.	£395 8 4	£523 3 4
Senior Commandt.	264 12 6	346 15 0
Coy. Commander	155 2 6	200 15 0
Jnr. Commander	126 4 7	158 3 4
Coy. Assistant	106 9 2	133 16 8

In addition to this:

Free rations and accommodation or cash allowance from £159 5s. per annum for Chief Commandant to £66 18s. 3d. a year for a "volunteer."

Outfit allowance for officers of £16.

Travelling and subsistence allowances at army rates, as for Lieut. Colonel, Major, Captain and Lieutenant.

Provision of servants or an allowance in lieu.

Free medical and dental treatment.

Allowance for camp kit.

Any reasonable woman and a great many men could live comfortably on the allowances paid to the senior ranks.

The higher scale of salaries and allowances are comparable to the salaries paid to the matrons of our London hospitals with training schools attached. Apart from their professional qualifications and great responsibilities these women possess administrative experience and skill in the practice of harsh economy, combined with a deep knowledge of women (and men), which entitles them to a place in the ranks of our public administrators. It is a matter of much doubt if the qualifications of any of the senior officers of the W.A.T.S. would command a salary of £3 a week in the London labour market.

The lower salaries and allowances would compare with the salaries of a great many experienced men and women occupying positions of administrative and financial responsibility in large municipal and private enterprises.

Recent additions to the ranks of the junior officers (Gazette of April 16th, 1940) include the Countess of Brecknock; Lady Elizabeth Pleydell-Bouverie (sister of the Earl of Radnor); the Hon. Mrs. Muriel Hornsby (sister of Lord Belper); and Lady Carolyn Howard (daughter of the Earl of Carlisle).

The wretched public can purchase Patronage and Patriotism at too high a price. CHARLES SPELLER

RIVAL CULTURES

SIR,—Mr. James Southworth's beautifully simple solution of our present distresses, to divide Europe into an Eastern and a Western sphere and leave it at that, appears to rest on two assumptions, neither of them true: (1) that when we have made our division, sacrificing to Eastern despotism and imperialism an undoubtedly Western people like the Czechs, each sphere will be content to stay put; (2) that Germany is purely and simply an Eastern country.

I should have thought a small acquaintance with recent history would have shown the unsoundness of the first assumption. Nazism is essentially aggressive and expansive. True, its expansion has hitherto been in the Eastern region (though that includes, as I have said, a Western people like the Czechs, not to mention Austria, with its European tradition); but it is notorious that Switzerland, Holland and Belgium are included in Nazi ambitions; that the Nazis were busily engaged in the Spanish civil war; that they are perpetually intriguing in South and even in North America. Does Mr. Southworth really think that once we have given him a blank cheque on Eastern Europe Hitler will sit quietly behind the Rhine and contemplate the peaceful evolution of Western civilisation beyond that frontier?

As for (2), I believe this to be equally false. "Germany" is a very complex conception. The country so called includes several races, with very different traditions. Rome, says Mr. Southworth, never succeeded in keeping the Germans permanently sugjugated. She never tried so far as part of modern Germany is concerned; she early abandoned the attempt elsewhere; but in parts of Germany she did maintain her authority for some centuries, and Roman traditions are in fact strong in portions of the West and South. It is Prussia which most obviously represents Eastern civilisation; elsewhere there are always to be found strong Western elements. In 1930 a German friend of mine (himself a Prussian, by the way, but as good a European as I know) remarked to me that Germany has always been suspended between East and West; "and one can never be sure which way the balance will tip." Three years later she was to take the eastward turn.

Thus, there seems to me to be a way out of Mr. Southworth's dilemma of conquest or permanent division of Europe into irreconcilable civilisations. It is such a peace settlement as will enable the Western elements in Germany not only to triumph at the moment of settlement, but to maintain themselves long enough to make Germany a true part of the European system.

Crouch End, N.8. H. IDRIS BELL

HAVE-NOTS?

SIR,—Mr. A. S. Neill writes that if our rulers add 180 million Russians to our enemies "then the war will be the long-expected straight one between the haves and the have-nots."

The U.S.S.R. cover a large area of the globe; they contain a large population; both territory and population have been added to in recent months. Figures given in a Chatham House pamphlet on Raw Materials and Colonies show that the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and the British Empire are the three units whose natural wealth enables them to be most nearly self-sufficient in the important raw materials. I should like to know why Mr. Neill considers the U.S.S.R. a have-not. FELICITY PALMER

What doctors say about *Spring*

"Spring," says the modern doctor, "is a season which threatens the health of many of us. I am surprised to find how many of my patients recognise this instinctively, how many tell me that *now* is the time they most need a tonic. Winter has sapped their vitality, Spring has tempted them to unwonted energy. Nature seems to have some way of issuing her warning—of reminding us that nerves and blood need extra nourishment before this extra energy can be used safely".

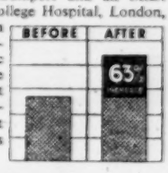
And *your* doctor will tell you that there is no better Spring tonic than 'Sanatogen' Nerve-Tonic Food. Not only does it contain two elements your body most urgently needs (organic phosphorus and protein) but it contains them *in chemical combination*. Only in this form can they be wholly and easily absorbed into the system, where, steadily and surely, they do their great work of revitalising worn nerves and building rich, red blood.

This is the whole secret of 'Sanatogen'. It is no miracle worker, creating supermen overnight. It is a true tonic food which repairs the ravages of nerve starvation as surely and as naturally as water revives a parched plant. It restores your vitality, builds you up after illness and gives you extra energy to cope with all the extra worries, responsibilities and activities that wartime and summer time may bring.

That is why 26,721 Doctors have written in praise of 'Sanatogen' Nerve-Tonic Food: why, in the last war, a Cabinet Minister told the House of Commons that it is "*a national necessity for preserving good nerves*". You and your family should start a course to-day.

'Sanatogen' Nerve-Tonic Food improves nerve-nourishment by 63%.

Experiments carried out by Gumpert and an M.D. (English) attached to King's College Hospital, London, have shown that in addition to its own wealth of phosphorus, 'Sanatogen' Nerve-Tonic Food helps you to absorb more phosphorus from ordinary diet as well. In only six days 'Sanatogen' produced an improvement of 63% in the phosphorus actually retained.



'SANATOGEN'
NERVE-TONIC FOOD

Obtainable at all chemists.
in 19/9 jars (8 weeks' course) and 2/3, 3/3, 5/9 and 10/9 tins.

The Registered Trade Mark 'SANATOGEN' applied to Nerve-Tonic Food, denotes a brand of casein and sodium glycerophosphate chemically combined by Genatosan Limited, the proprietors of the Trade Mark.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

If one is by nature unintrospective, the pleasures of memory and of looking forward seem feeble compared with that of living in the moment, taking to one's arms *le vierge le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui*. But, since September, I have done a great deal of remembering, and so, I suspect, have most of my contemporaries. The present is vivacious only at moments, and though the future may be bright, I don't fancy that its particular brightness will be congenial to those of us who are already inelastic with middle age. But I still find the pleasures of memory greatly mixed with pains. To remember the sorrows of the past is to renew them; to remember its pleasures is to lament their loss. Yet I find now that I can't stop myself recollecting; and at moments I envy those who can satisfy this unwilled and teasing desire by begetting a book of reminiscences. Alas, I have not the gifts required—I have an uncommonly vague memory, I have never kept a diary, I do not know even in what years the signal events of my adult life have happened, nor could I convey to others vivid pictures of the persons I have known best. But the past is not the less powerful for being thus unfocused. There are streets in London that I can never enter without wincing, so urgently do they revive an old distress; and when I am in Paris I seem to see a dozen Parises with superimposed semi-transparent contours trembling in front of the existent city, the Paris that dazzled the schoolboy, the Paris where I lived in such a respectable family before going to Oxford, the Paris that I used to pass through during the War, and then a whole succession of Parises, associated with different persons and different absorptions. On recent visits I have indeed found these memories obstructive, as if the hours of the past had accumulated on the pavements, layer upon layer of dead leaves making it difficult for me to move to my current occupations. In Venice it is much the same—loving a city for a long while carries a penalty: unlike human beings, it may not alter to the eye, but the time comes when it evokes a tumult of memories which drape in a haze the material and beautiful facts.

> As we grow older
> The world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated
> Of dead and living. Not the intense moment
> Isolated, with no before and after,
> But a lifetime burning in every moment.

Such ruminations as these have repeatedly interrupted my reading of a newly published autobiography, *Return Ticket*, by George Vandon (Heinemann, 7s. 6d.). The author has taken a pseudonym—and it would not be civil for me to give his identity—but he presents the other facts undisguised. He is four or five years my junior, but I have known him, though never intimately, for twenty years. We share many interests and many friends, and so it happens that reading his book I have at moments had the odd feeling that I was reading my own reminiscences. But in "George Vandon" there are two persons—first a writer, unconventional, cosmopolitan, very clever, who has educated his taste and imagination to digest all the arts of civilisation; and secondly, an aristocrat who, inheriting a peerage, an Adam mansion in Yorkshire and considerable lands, has shouldered these privileges with the bothersome responsibilities they entail. *Return Ticket* is the story of Dorian Gray turning, for half the year, into Squire Beltham.

> Rightly or wrongly, I remain what André Gide calls *disponible*; I can leap off at any tangent: in a century of vast transitions where everything is quicksand, I am (though I cannot say I actually enjoy it) really in my element; for I belong nowhere. Why should I object, if my heart were in it, if my soul could gladly smell as much of loam as my boots, to being thought a backwoodsman? Why should I object, if I were a pillar of "café society" and enjoyed it, to my country neighbours thinking of me as such, and to their being half-awed and half-contemptuous of so remote and unreal a glamour. . . . Why do I jib when foreigners ask, before my too fluent French, "But you are not a bit like an Englishman!"? Because all these desires to pin me down impinge on what I believe I care for more than most things on earth: my adaptability.

I can imagine the pursed censorious lips with which the serious young men of the succeeding generation will greet *Return Ticket*. "George Vandon" is the aesthete unashamed:

> Nothing will make me believe that a few unpaid intellectual idlers are a crime or a uselessness for a State to possess. After all they have taken from us power; they are taking money; at least let them leave us our dilettantism. And we call it dilettantism; but can I not be more useful, potentially, than many of these human termites, that ought to go back to school every ten years, I who have the time, the brains and the desire to follow the real course of humanity, that chimera with feet of lead and wings of gold.

For my part, I find this arrogance decidedly refreshing. George Vandon has enjoyed a life packed with fascinating and valuable experiences. Also he has been much less idle than he pretends. He was of course lucky, being remarkably gifted with intelligence, good health and good looks. But what is even more uncommon than possessing such gifts—he has known how to use them; and this in spite of a childhood and boyhood so chequered as to invite neurosis. Recently there has been a queer fashion for disparaging happiness: inadequacy to life and envy have disguised themselves as a hunger for social justice, with the purpose of making happy people feel guilty. The external conditions required for happiness are indeed lamentably rare—congenial work and sufficient leisure; but even those who have these privileges often fail to profit by them. And if one has had the luck to enjoy life, it seems to me a matter not for guilt but for gratitude, and even for pride. So I find most estimable George Vandon's catalogue of past pleasures. Such persons as he, with particular talents for the arts of life, have been too much bullied lately by their puritanical juniors. Young persons who have never earned a penny in their lives upbraid industrious writers and painters with indifference to the "working" classes. Neurotics, who transfer their hatred of their fathers into a hatred of all established institutions, presume to call "escapists" those who think Giotto, Shakespeare and Beethoven supremely important. But the apprehension of beauty is neither frivolous nor easy. Like the pursuit of knowledge and the cherishing of affection, it makes life worth living, gives a meaning to man's long evolution through the first vertebrates and anthropoids. This at least was a belief common among the generation to which I belong.

It is high time that a word was said in favour of the wicked "Nineteen-Twenties." To-day the disapproving young seem to think that we of the Twenties devoted our time to party-going and debauchery. There were, of course, the Bright Young People, and very bright some of them were, and it is better for young people to be bright than to be dull. But the Twenties were a period of extraordinary energy in art and thought. We were not so unconcerned with politics as people now suppose; but the war had made us slightly sceptical of political machinery. We thought—and many of us still think—that economic changes, however desirable, were less urgent than a revolution in education; that discovering how to improve the individual was infinitely more important than giving more power to the State. (We had seen during the war an advance model of Totalitarianism.) We thought, in fine, that Freud was piercing deeper into the heart of the human problem than Marx had ever done. Aldous Huxley in this respect remains a characteristic Twenties figure, though his puritanical misanthropy was particular to himself; and his beliefs to-day are an extreme projection of convictions common to many of us. He holds that the way to make people better has already been discovered; I do not. I believe, moreover, that the possibility of such improvement depends on our destroying Nazism, and that Nazism can be destroyed only by force. But despite my disagreement with Huxley in these matters, I still think he has diagnosed our distresses more profoundly than any follower of Marx.

My recollections of "Between the Wars" have carried me a long way from George Vandon. In the Twenties he was in Paris, Warsaw, Madrid, and the London of the time is hardly mentioned. I doubt if he knew Lytton Strachey, E. M. Forster, Desmond MacCarthy or Aldous Huxley, and his book is not that Apologia for an Age which I want to see. He is indeed too insolently an individual to defend anything except himself, and only occasionally does he condescend even to this. His manner is not conciliatory. For he manages to regard his life with unflattering detachment, applying to himself much of the coldness one feels in his accounts of other people. His early life is very well done: in a few sentences we see the mother who extorted admiration without giving love; and then comes the misery of Charterhouse, with barn-door capons and geese pecking at the young swan. Oxford, Paris, embassies and journalism follow; till the aesthete, given up to the civilised pleasures, abandons this addiction for the labours of a businesslike landowner. The last chapter is a criticism of England now, in which he indicts the "Little Man," frivolous, puerile, a hater of intellect and art, the "Little Man" who is the ironic result of a century of well-intended and reasonable reforms. George Vandon is one of the last specimens of a disappearing race—the intelligent aristocrats who believe in aristocracy. Surprisingly he seems not to recognise that the death of the aristocracy is a suicide. When they abandoned taste, they lost their chief *raison d'être*. Countless Laszlos in the Stately Homes are the buboes that betray a mortal and self-inflicted pestilence.

George Vandon is sometimes malicious about the people he mentions, which is a mistake, I think, in a pseudonymous book; but the only activity (and this is characteristic of the Twenties) that excites strong disapproval is being "on the make." Too many sentences are cluttered with an agglomeration of names, collected with the pertinacity of a bower-bird or a hostess. But how admirably he can write! The style is ostentatiously elaborate, like the façade of a baroque cathedral in Spain. The planned meanderings of Henry James and Proust are used to express a violent romanticism which thousands of books and places and musics have further invigorated. This is iridescent, rhetorical prose, such as hardly any living writer dares to employ. I recommend *Return Ticket* urgently to other survivors from the Twenties, who will recover from it their own past; and no less to the earnest intellectuals of the Thirties, who will enjoy, by contrast, a sense of their own worthiness and superiority.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The American Presidency. By HAROLD J. LASKI. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

I am not surprised that Professor Laski's course of lectures at Indiana University has been taken by the Book of the Month Club in the United States. If it is not also a best-seller here, it will only be because the British public is still insufficiently interested in American institu-

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HAROLD NICOLSON in the TELEGRAPH
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JONATHAN CAPE THIRTY BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON

tions. It is one of the best books ever written about the institutions of another country by a foreign observer. It combines to a very unusual degree detached observation with inside knowledge. Mr. Laski's knowledge of the literature of American thought and institutions is profound. His grasp of the working of the Presidency is only possible to one who knows the inside of the White House and has been the close friend of several of the most famous members of the Supreme Court. The book is dedicated to F. D. R.

The American Constitution is a puzzle to most English people. They know vaguely that it was founded on a misinterpretation of British institutions in the eighteenth century; some people have heard the epigram about the American President being a fossilised edition of George III. But not every Englishman who talks about the American Constitution understands the problems that arise when the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary are constitutionally separated, and many people who had heard of "checks and balances," were yet surprised when President Wilson could negotiate a treaty and then have his plans frustrated by the Senate. One result has been an exaggerated distrust of Washington policy often echoed even in official circles here. Again, English students are apt to take for granted that a Cabinet without collective responsibility or a place in the legislature is absurd. Mr. Laski's analysis of the change that would be involved if the American Cabinet took part in Congress debates is an admirable example of the difference between superficial criticism and thorough mastery of the actual working of institutions. He shows that this change, which at first sight seems simple and obviously desirable, would, in fact, upset the entire balance of the American Constitution.

The book is an examination of a single institution, through which the reader is given a living picture of the American Constitution at work. It is not a sermon to Americans, but Professor Laski would not be himself if he did not make fruitful criticisms and suggestions. One of his main arguments is that "the central problem of representative government in a democracy is to make the source of responsibility for action unmistakable," and he suggests that this problem is not solved in the American system. "Its very nature is to dissipate responsibility by substituting the politics of manoeuvre for the politics of policy." He ends by urging that the time has come when Americans should be less fearful of leadership, less anxious to check the President and more ready to allow the Chief Executive freedom to carry through the great reconstruction for which no one else in America can be responsible. Would Mr. Laski be equally clear on this point if there were now a reactionary in the White House?

Professor Laski has never written with more vitality. The excessive fluency and undue preference for abstract nouns which have marred some of his writing seldom bother the reader of this book, which, on the contrary, contains more than Mr. Laski's average of brilliant sentences and epigrammatic summaries. Occasionally one still wonders how, in proof reading, his sub-editorial pencil can fail to simplify such a sentence as this: "There is a significant sense in which his remoteness is not less important than his friendliness as an instrument in making effective his policy." What is lost in substituting: "To succeed, the President must be remote as well as friendly"? And why should so brilliant a writer say: "Their relation is one of departmental interstitiality"? But such occasional polysyllabic blots will not in any way lessen the gratitude which all students of America will feel to Mr. Laski for the best English study of a great subject.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

NEW NOVELS

Alexei the Gangster. By YURI HERMAN. *Routledge.* 8s.

The Dark Door. By MAURICE COLLIS. *Faber.* 7s. 6d.

Tales Before Midnight. By STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

Say that She were Gone. By PHILIP JORDAN. *Heinemann.* 8s. 6d.

The Survivor. By DENNIS PARRY. *Hale.* 7s. 6d.

Our Lady of the Earthquakes. By PETER BROOKE. *Cresset Press.* 7s. 6d.

The writer in a totalitarian State must face two sorts of censorship. The first—that explicitly imposed by the Government—is the less serious, for we have seen that some of the most censored periods of history (the sixteenth century in England, the eighteenth in France) have yet produced independent and spirited literatures. This, no doubt, was due in part to the inefficiency of the control and in part to the fact the ruling classes themselves were largely immune from their own laws, whereas to-day it is doubtful whether even Hitler would be allowed to publish a book seriously disparaging his own character; but it is also true that the suppression of certain views will, like the banning of half a dozen obscene words, irritate rather than injure a creative writer. The second sort of censorship is far more dangerous. This is the official condemnation of certain social attitudes and a forbiddance to advocate or even discuss undesirable mental outlooks. Just as the Victorians succeeded in suppressing certain common aspects of sex so effectively that, judging by the novels of the time, one almost believes they were absent altogether, so the efficient tyrannies of the future may succeed in suppressing such treasonable attitudes as tolerance and individualism. To live by the pleasure of tyrants is bad, to depend for one's earnings on the whims of patronage is, perhaps, worse; but most oppressive of all is the compulsion to adapt oneself to public opinion. So far (except, perhaps, in the Roman empire) the State had never been a unified whole, and incompetence has combined with the doctrine of free competition to ensure that every view has had its active opposition. If the new States become, as they proclaim, single bodies free from internal contradictions, public opinion will have the force of law, and law will see to it that no cracks appear in public opinion. In Russia and Germany this second censorship is already in full blast, and it seems as dangerous to attack comradeship or courage as to defend Trotski or the Jews. The writer of the future may have to satisfy not the policies of a few patrons but the prejudices of a hundred million neighbours.

Alexei the Gangster is a Russian demonstration that crime doesn't pay. Alexei is an habitual small-time criminal who escapes from a prison-camp, picks pockets, becomes increasingly drunken and unhappy, and finds his precarious freedom so unsatisfactory that he attempts to commit suicide. He is prevented, sent to hospital and a psychological clinic, entertained to tea and given presents by a detective, and is at last sufficiently redeemed to betray an old colleague who has become an enemy of the people, and start afresh with the blessing of the Ogpu. The character-drawing is excellent throughout, the redemption is convincing, and there is little overt propaganda; yet the effect of the whole is as infuriating as that of a nineteenth-century morality story. One is left with the impression that Soviet communism is allergic not only to crime but also to individuality. Poor Alexei's trouble is his lack of identity papers. He steals large amounts of money but can seldom find anywhere to sleep except station

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By H. W. SINGER, Ph.D.(Cambridge)
Assistant Lecturer in Economics at the University of Manchester. **8s. 6d.**

This book was completed before the outbreak of the present War. The War may temporarily eclipse the grave social problem with which it deals, but it is certain that unemployment will again challenge the effort of the nation in a degree perhaps never paralleled before. The object of this book is to review past experience in non-technical language which brings home to the average student of social affairs the issues involved.

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waiting-rooms, since wherever he goes they ask him for his registration book and question him in detail about his job. He finds it impossible even to buy a drink without meeting detectives, or sleep in a peasant's cottage without running into a policeman. Not unnaturally, this drives him into a Kafkaesque persecution mania of such dimensions as to render him quite unfit for crime and make even constables and peasant girls address him as "You neurotic!" Business is still further complicated, on the one hand by moral scruples about robbing proletarians ("Even a crook's got his code—to take wages from a working man, that's not our trade. In my time there was merchant's gold: we robbed the shop-keepers, the traders," etc., etc.); and on the other, by the fact that robbery of State property is, it seems, punished by death. Honesty, in short, is the purest self-interest, and it is only Alexei's silly psychosis about his independence that keeps him a crook so long. The reward of his reformation—a complete set of the documents that entitle one to exist—is presented as a charter of freedom; actually, it seems rather like a formal acknowledgment of surrender, and leaves us with the suspicion that *Alexei the Gangster* is really an allegoric saga of the Last of the Bourgeois.

Mr. Collis is known for his erudite and imaginative delvings into Siamese history. *The Dark Door* is described, unpromisingly, as a thriller, and does, indeed, purport to record the adventures of a British secret service agent disguised as a Buddhist monk and accompanied by an attractive Eurasian girl in the guise of an acolyte. Happily, the plot proves a false alarm, for the author shows no interest in thrills or romance but uses his stereotyped framework as excuse for a discursive, instructive and very entertaining series of dissertations upon Burmese village life and esoteric Buddhist philosophy. It is pleasant to learn that the Burmese villager is an intellectual snob, enjoying sermons that continue for hours and treat of ideas so rarefied and classical that they are completely incomprehensible. Mr. Collis, I suspect, shares their simple enthusiasm, for he misses no chance to display his philosophic learning or to quote such important profundities as "In the Quidity are the non-existence of all the Ideals, which are imaginary, and also their existence, for the latter exist by the very fact of their non-existence." There is, perhaps, a little too much of this for the general reader, and those who expect an exciting tale of espionage amongst dangerous natives, with the usual ration of escapades, escalades and poisoned knives in the back, had better leave this "thriller" alone. It is, however, a vivid and unusual snapshot of a curious culture, and left me with the feeling that I had learnt a good deal about the psychology of the Burmese peasant.

Tales Before Midnight is a collection of Mr. Benét's characteristic short stories. There are tales about seventeenth-century America, about pub-crawlers, about fairies, about unpleasant wealthy women, about the Romans leaving Britain (a good one), about the infant Christ being driven out by Nazis (a most embarrassing one), and one about a doctor in the next world. Most of them are written in the old style: that is, they have plenty of incident and could be read aloud to almost any audience, and some are imaginative to a high degree. Mr. Benét seldom generalises, is not ashamed of the picturesque, and provides at least one good *event* in each story. Even at his most allegoric he is thoroughly earthy; and after the trick-psychology of the Americans, the socially significant whimsy of the Russians, and the long, careful little-ado-about-less of the admirable English, it is pleasant again to find a lively specimen of the old-fashioned raconteur.

Say that She were Gone and *The Survivor* mean well but not much. Mr. Jordan's book is about the marital, moral and alcoholic troubles

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of a foreign correspondent covering the Republican side of the Spanish Civil War, who is bribed to act as a spy for Franco. It is a slick, readable, and, apart from a tiresome habit of putting a character in 1936 and making him accurately prophesy the future, sympathetic picture of the period; and contains some good caricaturish characterisation. The hero, unfortunately, is a familiar Hemingway bore. He talks tough, is incomprehensibly a magnet for rich and lovely women, continually drinks French bottled beer, and occasionally chats about Stendhal. In spite of his reiteratedly emphasised cosmopolitan culture, he talks like an illiterate (" We might drink a lot. We could eat a fine dinner some place "), and endlessly indulges in maudlin or rowdy intoxications. The trouble, in fact, is that Mr. Jordan has written in an outworn convention and presented another of those dreary introspective toughs who, twenty years ago, spilt over from reportage into fiction. *Say that She were Gone* is good enough of its kind; it all depends whether it's the kind you like. Mr. Jordan is commonplace and goodish; Mr. Parry is original and baddish. *The Survivor* is about a brilliant, Rabelaisian, genuinely wicked old man whose spirit transfers itself to the body of his harmless daughter, and compels her to burst into foul language, perform dangerous surgical operations, and throw ammonia into people's faces. Such a subject, whether its treatment be macabre or farcical, demands lush imagination and an unbridled facility for invention. Mr. Parry, however, keeps his feet firmly on the ground, and uses his fantastic first premise merely to introduce some common emotional relationships. It is a pity that he has denied his plot the luxuriance it deserved, and hatched his extraordinary egg into quite an ordinary chicken.

Our Lady of the Earthquakes, which is about Teresa, a lovely South American, and her affairs with playwrights, aviators, master criminals called Arsène (Lupin ?), etc., is that rare thing, a little gem of pure, pellucid, perfect silliness. When Boris takes her hand he finds her " trembling, like a noble dove going out to war "; when she tells off the Comte de Loigny her voice is " completely inhuman, like a cry, the sharp and terrible protest of the unthinkable beginning of the world, the cleavage of moon from earth, of water from earth, of grass from creature "; while when Carol noticed that " Teresa, herself someone abnormally feminine, but now in this terrifying atmosphere quadrupled her personality, and in inverse ratio provoked his anger with an insulting virginity," he realised that " ahead of him lay the tedium (*sic*) vitae, the raison d'être, the sine qua non, perhaps marriage, or God knew what." If, as I incline to suspect, Mr. Brooke intends his novel humorously, he has let the joke go about a hundred pages too far. If it is meant seriously, I should not like to say how much too long it is.

JOHN MAIR

THE CASE OF CHARLES II.

The Last Rally: A Study of Charles II. By HILAIRE BELLOC. *Cassell.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Belloc is, or was, a man of genius; nothing could be more delightful than his light verse, his Bad (and Worse) Children. But for many years now he has been engaged in the attempt to rewrite English history in accordance with his own ideas, and turning out biographies of all, or almost all, the great figures of history. This must be about his *n*th historical biography. Not much good *qua* biography, neither amusing nor even interesting, it is a sort of tract on Charles II from Mr. Belloc's point of view: a work in which all Mr. Belloc's bees buzz loudly, with such reiterative clamour as to become a positive bore.

The book has, of course, a thesis, or rather several; it is almost all thesis, very little of it history: that Charles II's reign was the last rally of the English monarchy against the Money-Power; that Monarchy, or One-Man government, is the only way of mastering the Money-Power in the state; that Charles II set himself this life-long task, which he all but accomplished. Each of these propositions is more nonsensical than the last. There is no evidence that Charles conceived such a task; he was just taking his chance at the Restoration as anybody else would. Only a fool like the Comte de Chambord, or James II, would not. And it happened that Charles was particularly good at taking chances: he was a clever opportunist, and he had luck. Then there is no reason to suppose that Monarchy is the only way of dealing with the Rich, or that there is an ineluctable conflict between the two. As often as not they have been in alliance, served each other's purposes very well: what about the England of James I, the France of Napoleon III, the Germany of William II? Mr. Belloc's *idée fixe* about the later Stuarts being the last real English monarchs is equally unsubstantiated. The simple answer to that nonsense is that William III *governed*; so, unfortunately, to our loss, did George III. The fact is that the powers of the Crown were not overthrown in a night, but gradually lost to Parliament; even so, as everybody with any knowledge of contemporary historical studies knows, those powers remained active till a good deal later than the Whig view of history allowed.

Mr. Belloc has a paragraph of fun at the expense of the Whig interpretation of history. That particular horse is dead now; but there was always more go in it than in the ridiculous Tory interpretation which has taken its place since the last war, and which is all that Mr. Belloc's *Last Rally* comes to. The cult of Charles II, the view that he was a great man, the founder of our naval power, as the Stuarts were of the Empire: how absurd it all is! If Charles was a great man, it is odd that nobody noticed it at the time. It so happens that we have very good evidence what sort of man he was, including one masterpiece of psychological observation by Halifax, who was in a good position to know; and there is a remarkable agreement of opinion about him. He was clever, amusing, sceptical, a dissimulator, devoted above all to his ease, not given to continuous work or thought: a born opportunist. When these Tories make out what a great statesman he was, one has only to point to the way he sacrificed the interests of this country and of Europe for the sake of Louis XIV's subsidies, enabling France to become so strong as to dominate Europe. This was not unlike the way in which Baldwin and Chamberlain allowed Germany to get into a position from which to threaten Europe, in the disgusting period through which it has been our ill fortune to live since 1931: a disgrace in our history comparable to the reign of Charles II.

As for his being the founder of our sea-power, have these Tory fools never heard of the Commonwealth's great Admiral Blake, or Drake and Hawkins, Elizabeth and Henry VIII? When Mr. Belloc comes to a really great man, William III, he is incapable of doing him justice. Charles II was a Catholic and therefore a great man, William was a Protestant and he doesn't like him. It is really too simple. I am not Dutch and I don't like Protestantism, but that does not prevent me from seeing that William was a great man and Charles II was not.

Mr. Belloc adds a number of Catholic fads of his own to the silliness of the Tory interpretation of history. He tells us that " the survival of Catholicism in England . . . was the most important single element in the make-up of the community." It was not; it would have had no great importance if Charles and James had

not been on the Catholic side. Mr. Belloc repeats over and over that the Catholic minority was at least one-eighth of the population at this time, or "anything from one-sixth to a quarter of the population if we count all those who had remaining sympathies and connections with the old religion." There is not the slightest evidence for this: it is quite fantastic. In fact throughout the book he has Catholicism on the brain, a regular King Charles's head: in the end it is just a bore.

Let Mr. Belloc write as many verses as he pleases: but let him write no more such historical biographies! A. L. ROWSE

A GRANDEE REBEL

In Place of Splendour. By CONSTANCIA DE LA MORA. *Michael Joseph.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Every journalist who passed through Valencia in 1937 will remember Constancia de la Mora, whose charm and tact, working from the Press Bureau, hastened and eased their journeys. Here she tells the fascinating story of her own life, the story of a personal revolt coinciding with, so that it comes to symbolise, the revolt of the Spanish people. For she grew up sheltered behind those two armoured pill-boxes of the Spanish Hierarchy, religion and caste, which shut her off from any possibility of contamination by the hungry illiterate life below her, as they shut off the masses from any opportunity of leading dignified human lives.

Her grandfather was the famous Conservative prime minister who, at the time when war profits were flowing into Spain and watering the commercial classes to sprout titles like crocuses in spring, formed a national government to save the country from the rising tide of working-class unrest. The daughter of the Saviour of Spain received an upbringing appropriate to her rank and the cloistered horrors of a Spanish Catholic school can be gauged from the fact that when a lucky chance sent her to a convent school in England, that seemed by comparison to be Liberty itself. It was the chances of travel, unusual for a Spanish girl in her position, which opened her eyes to the cramped and narrow silliness of Madrid Society where, on her return from England, she was expected to expose herself in the marriage market. Revolt from that landed her in a marriage to an indolent scrounging provincial who planned to live off his distinguished wife's dowry. Another act of rebellion, by which she achieved the status, sinful and *déclassée* in her Spain, of an independent self-supporting woman, coincided with the fall of Primo de Rivera.

From then on politics determined her life. She obtained the first Spanish divorce under the new republican laws and married a brilliant young flying officer, Cizneros, who was later sent to Rome and Berlin as air attaché. In those two capitals they impotently watched the plot against their country being hatched while the newly elected Lerroux government flirted with the future invaders. With the outbreak of the Spanish War we reach more familiar territory, though Constancia de la Mora gives us an unusual angle derived partly from her own experience with evacuee children and at the Press Bureau, partly from that of her husband who became Chief of the Republican Air Force. The account of the last days of Negrin's government, given here with the authority both of his public position and that personal integrity which no one who met him could doubt, will have to be weighed by historians against Colonel Casado's version. The interest of this book is not the least impaired by the extension of that conflict to engulf our whole continent. The process Constancia de la Mora describes is a part of the historical crisis which the whole of Europe is enduring. Her book, with its generous humanity and lively faith, illuminates and illustrates it. T. C. WORSLEY

GENTLEMEN v. PLAYERS

Death on the Boat Train. By JOHN RHODE. *Collins.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
There Came Both Mist and Snow. By MICHAEL INNES. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Murder in the Stars. By JONATHAN STAGGE. *Michael Joseph.* 8*s.* 3*d.*
Swing It, Death. By GAVIN HOLT. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Dear Dead Woman. By ANTHONY GILBERT. *Collins.* 8*s.* 3*d.*
The Hongkong Airbase Murders. By VAN WYCK MASON. *Jarrolds.* 8*s.* 3*d.*
Mr. Fortune Here. By H. C. BAILEY. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The New Adventures of Ellery Queen. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The attitude of detective authors to their public constantly reminds me of batsmen facing the bowlers. They do not write just for pleasure but as participants in a compulsory game, where the main object of the player is to protect his wicket against the incessant attack of an adversary: the wicket being, of course, the identity of the murderer, which must be guarded against the reader's curiosity by every manoeuvre legitimised by the rules of the game. In this popular pastime the reviewer is assigned the triple role of umpire, scorer and spectator; he must uphold the unwritten laws of detection, chalk up the runs, and occasionally shout a little encouragement or voice his protest by barracking. And as in cricket there is an amateur and a professional style of batting, so, too, in detection a similar class difference has evolved.

The opening batsmen in the present innings offer a perfect opportunity to observe these contrasting styles. John Rhode is a steady professional of the Yorkshire type; he has no strokes of brilliance, but he is determined not to get bowled out; and he is quite content to stay at the crease all day without scoring a run provided he keeps his wicket. In *Death on the Boat Train* a traveller on the boat train from Southampton to Waterloo is found dying from an injection of poison at the London terminus. None of the many characters who had a motive for murdering the man could have been aboard the train, yet the hypodermic used on him is picked up by a platelayer along the line who saw it fall from the express. How do you propose to get a ball past that defence? You can't, any more than you can with a cricketer who puts both his pads squarely in front of the stumps. But you can appeal to the umpire; and in this case the umpire gives John Rhode "out"—l.b.w. The discreet use of pads is essential in detection, and blocking a straight ball with them cannot be allowed.

Mr. Innes' methods are the exact opposite of John Rhode's. He comes in determined to hit the bowling to all parts of the field, and so he does. A Christmas house party indulges in a little revolver practice as one of its parlour games. Before dinner the host is found shot in the library. Who shot him? How well we know that plumb wicket Mr. Innes has chosen in *There Came Both Mist and Snow!* We even recognise the quotation which so bothers Detective-Inspector Appleby. But what good does that do? Mr. Innes scores off us at every stroke. Cuts, glides, straight drives; he never misses. It is only when Mr. Innes finally retires to the pavilion flourishing his bat that we can see the pitch and observe he has forgotten to set up the stumps. Behind that flashing blade and dazzling footwork there was nothing at all at which to aim. I don't know what game Mr. Innes was playing but it was not detective cricket.

The amateur style is more attractive to watch but less effective in defence. Mr. Jonathan Stagge is another amateur, who is content to take risks provided he scores a few runs; and in *Murder in the Stars* he earns a round of applause

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in the very first over. His New England country doctor, Dr. Westlake, whose acquaintance we first made years ago, drives out at night in response to a telephone call. His car breaks down and he walks to find a garage. On the way he runs across a motor smash. The car seems familiar and the number plate even more familiar—it is his own. The face of the body slumped in the driving seat is unrecognisable, but the medical bag, the clothes on the body, even the letters in the pockets, all are Dr. Westlake's. He has the unusual experience of finding himself dead. More exciting events follow, but Mr. Stagge soon offers an easy chance to first slip, which should be snapped up.

Gavin Holt has the professional touch in spite of an aggressive stance. He scores freely off loose bowling, but a good length ball frightens him; he never knows when it may come so he tends to play back, almost treading on his wicket. *Swing It, Death* deals with the poisoning of an American lady crooner in her dressing-room at a London theatre. The back-stage atmosphere is worked for all it is worth, and so is the quasi-American dialogue. But these are the trimmings: the plot beneath is purely conventional, ending in a conventional solution.

Anthony Gilbert, another professional, is very uneven in his performances; he may score a century or get himself out by a careless stroke. *Dear Dead Woman* is one of his lucky innings. The plot cannot be revealed, but the writing is extremely realistic, the characters highly plausible, and the situation just what may be happening this minute in any London suburb. This book will be appreciated as the professional at his best—confident of his plot careful in his workmanship, pleased with his characters.

Mr. Van Wyck Mason is styled the leading writer of espionage in America. This sounds as professional as Phillips Oppenheim, and as monotonous; but I should class Mr. Mason among the amateurs from the free manner in which he opens his shoulders to anything short of a length. *The Hongkong Airbase Murders* holds a full complement of spies and precious formulae, and at first glance may appear to be the usual nonsense taking the line of least resistance and maximum local colour. But Mr. Mason can switch from espionage to detection whenever he likes; he has the great gift of portraying vivid but ambiguous characters. The men are all tough, but are they stupid, too? The women all beautiful and unscrupulous, but which side are they on? Mr. Mason will make you run with the sun in your eyes to catch him in the deep.

The professional status of H. C. Bailey and Ellery Queen needs no emphasis. These two volumes of short stories reveal all the dodges and little of the intelligence of which their authors are capable. Mr. Fortune comes out better than Ellery Queen because he has lived most of his life among such trivialities. I may be doing these prolific writers an injustice, however. The urgent need of a detective "short" comes on at bedtime; and night after night Bailey and Queen will put anyone to sleep.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

COLONIAL PROBLEMS

Europe and West Africa. By C. K. MEEK, W. M. MACMILLAN and E. R. J. HUSSEY. *Oxford University Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

One of the surprising things about British colonial practice in West Africa is that neither in the case of mining nor in the even more important case of cocoa has development owed anything to official direction or control. The lengths to which officialdom is still prepared to carry *laissez-faire* fills a modernist like Professor Macmillan with despondency and alarm.

Take mining. In poverty-stricken colonies the case for making the State the sole mineral owner is practically overwhelming. But in Northern Nigeria half the royalties go to the functionless Niger Company. In the Gold Coast colony mineral rights belong to the surface owner. The Colonial Office has no Mines Department nor even a permanent mining adviser to provide technical direction. Consequently tribal authorities and Colonial Governments themselves have made some thoroughly bad bargains with concessionaires and others. West African mining areas are as often as not without a resident administrative officer. The mushroom villages or native towns which spring up to house mine labour "normally present deplorable conditions of insanitary overcrowding, rack-renting, thieving and general lawlessness." As for taxation, gold mining pays nothing to the Gold Coast exchequer, yet is liable to the British exchequer for the full weight of British income tax and National Defence Contribution. This palpable anomaly and injustice negates the proud boast that Britain exacts no tribute from her colonies. It helps also to account for the fact that wage-rates range between 6*d.* and 1*s.* 3*d.* a day, and that the most serious of all health problems is malnutrition. "There are hundreds of tribes living, for part of the year at least, in a state of semi-starvation."

The same neglect has brought the once prosperous cocoa industry to the edge of chaos. Here Professor Macmillan is quite categorical. "From first to last," he says, "this African industry has been left to find its own feet by the unaided efforts of Africans." And elsewhere: "The fact is that in the achievement of the cocoa industry the Africans have been denied Government help." The technical problems of preparing and marketing the cocoa crop are grave enough, as the great hold-up of 1938 showed. But *laissez-faire* has encouraged the growth of a host of social and legal problems as well, connected especially with the "inordinate and unmeasured development of usury," and with questions of land-ownership and tribal jurisdiction, all of which give rise to "indescribable complications."

From his survey of the facts Professor Macmillan draws certain political conclusions. First, that the Colonial Office policy of indirect rule has no applicability, at any rate to the towns and the cocoa districts, where the most important and most pressing problems arise; second, that there must be a real move towards a representative parliamentary system; and third, that a strong and enlightened central government, in which the people must participate, is essential.

What rate of political advance is practicable? Professor Macmillan makes no direct reply. But Dr. Meek's contribution contains some suggestive and valuable remarks on the adaptability of Africans. "There is plenty of evidence," he claims, "that cultural differences in language, religion and social organisation can be obliterated in a single generation." In Northern Nigeria a population of slaves was transformed to one of independent peasant farmers in a few years following 1901. Similarly, Africans have often, also within a few years, turned over to "new crops, entailing new methods of cultivation, new systems of rotation, new types of food, new ways of cooking, and a whole host of new social and religious habits." There seems no reason to think they would not be equally quick to adopt new ideas and behaviour in the political field if history were to present them with their chance.

LEONARD BARNES

TRISTAN DA CUNHA

Tristan Da Cunha. By ERLING CHRISTOPHERSEN. *Cassell.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Tristan da Cunha is known to us chiefly in superlatives. It is the loneliest inhabited island in the world, the most remote, its people the healthiest, the most hungry, the most peaceable. And, of course, they have the best teeth. A certain gloom hangs over accounts of the island nevertheless; it has a shocking climate, for the roar of the wind on its mountains and precipices rarely abates. The "good old days" (which the islanders speak of) when the whalers frequently called and helped by exchange of supplies have vanished since steam took the place of sail, a decline in the island economy has taken place—and nervous disorders in young women have become commoner. One detects a prison apathy in these strong, long-lived people who are uncomfortably aware that if they left their island they would stand little chance, given the conditions of our world. If, one reflects, the price of superb health and all the other superlatives is the mere subsistence level of Tristan da Cunha, if a list of social negatives is the price paid for the withering away of the state, the conclusions to be drawn from their hundred and twenty years of life are not encouraging.

Such pessimism may however be unfounded. The Norwegian scientific expedition, which Dr. Christophersen led on the island in 1937, had its botanists, its algologist, zoologist, geologist, dentist and doctor, but no anthropologist. This is a lack which will be very noticeable to the reader who will wish that some of the pages given to the wingless birds and the fish had been given to the cultural, peculiarities and memories of the people. He would have written down, for example, their extraordinary collection of songs picked up from seamen in the last 100 years; we would learn something of their religion on which Dr. Christophersen is very vague. They appear to have added an uncouth note of their own to their evangelical faith: a gramophone plays "a worldly song" as a voluntary at their Sunday services, and occasionally a Spanish dance precedes it. They also keep New Year's Eve in the Scottish manner. These things, started by the grim conditions of the island though they are, would have been worth examining.

No doubt Tristan da Cunha is for the anthropologist a melting pot in which the ingredients have not had time to melt properly. The founders of the colony were a Scottish corporal, his Creole wife and a Hottentot platoon, who were sent there in 1816 to prevent any would-be rescuers of Napoleon from using the island as a base. The Hottentots returned but Glass, the Scotsman, stayed on and in time the population was increased by five sluttish and quarrelsome ladies from St. Helena. The violence which accompanied the founding of Pitcairn, the *Bounty* island, has never existed in Tristan da Cunha, which has never had any crime—nor any laws—and has easily assimilated new elements. The headman in 1937 is of Italian descent and a very magnificent figure he is.

The health of Tristan da Cunha has become a byword. Fish and potatoes are the main diet, though there are meat and berry pudding on Christmas Day. None of the major diseases exists, as far as sporadic investigation can decide. Any heredity which can be traced back to the Glass period accounts for some asthma, catarrh and deafness—one family suffers from an enlarged ear—but the dull regular life and diet seem to have left the inhabitants unattractive to visiting microbes from the ships. The annual arrival of a boat means an infection of colds for the island but it soon passes. The strange thing is that the children all suffer from malnutrition and some never taste milk or butter at all in childhood; yet they grow up into sound and superb physical specimens. There appears to be no reason for the milk shortage except the conservatism of the islanders; indeed as their isolation grows and their island becomes more and more like Lord Beaverbrook's idea of Paradise, so their will and invention decline and a crust of obstinacy harden.

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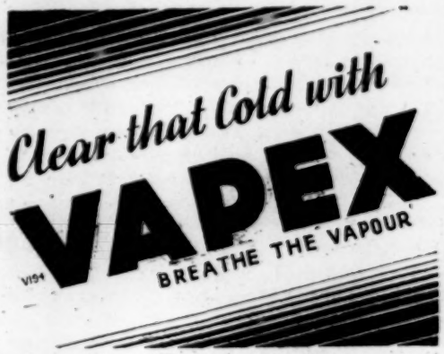

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Edward Gibbon's Library. A Catalogue Edited and Introduced by GEOFFREY KEYNES. *Cape.* 15*s.*

Twelve years ago some fourteen hundred volumes from Gibbon's library, most of them in excellent condition, were sold at Sotheby's for something less than £1,600. The authorities of Magdalen, whom one would have expected to purchase the collection entire, regrettably allowed the books to be dispersed. Mr. Geoffrey Keynes has now compiled a catalogue of Gibbon's library, which covers, it is thought, at least five-sixths of all the books owned by the historian. It contains some 2,500 titles, and has been compiled with ingenious industry from a variety of sources, including two catalogues made in the owner's lifetime, one in his London house and one at Lausanne, and the catalogues of various sales. Gibbon gave his books a passionate devotion, "my seraglio," he calls them, congratulating himself, like the Grand Turk—"My seraglio was ample, my choice was free, my appetite was keen." His expenditure upon these tawny favourites with their ornaments of gilt was correspondingly prodigal. "From January, 1785, to January, 1788, three years and a half, he paid over £5,000 for books, and a single bill for book-binding paid in July, 1785, amounted to £139 12*s.*" This is one of many interesting details in Mr. Keynes's admirable introduction. The Catalogue is variously instructive: not only does it reveal the printed sources from which the History was principally constructed, but it impresses upon us the limitations in the general reading available a hundred and fifty years ago. For Gibbon possessed, beside the books that were his tools, a rich and characteristic "Gentleman's Library." There were few novels or biographies, and some of the greatest English writers, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, were neglected if not forgotten. There are some more surprising omissions: the name of Paley does not occur in the catalogue, though his *Moral and Political Philosophy* was published in 1785. Nor does Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, which appeared in 1791, three years before Gibbon's death, but it seems that the Lausanne catalogue was kept up only till 1789, and this book probably is one of those which have disappeared without traces. Mr. Keynes, Mr. R. A. Skelton and Mr. Hart-Davis who assisted him, and the publishers who have had the enterprise to produce this catalogue, deserve the warm gratitude of all Gibbonians. It may sound a rather forbidding work, but its pages, as one turns them, suggest a hundred curious speculations and give out a delightful savour of eighteenth-century erudition.

Horizon, No. 5. 1*s.*

With its fifth number *Horizon* fully maintains the standard of merit and variety it has set itself. The editor addresses himself to the intellectuals and attempts to resolve their doubts about communism, pacifism and Mr. Chamberlain. Peter Quennell's exploration of the Romantic catastrophe is more than usually perceptive. The political article is contributed by R. H. S. Crossman—an acute examination of the problems of freedom and power. Frank Richards, author and editor of the *Magnet*, in a spirited reply to Orwell's attack demonstrates how ably he can write and how fatuously he can think. Stephen Spender presents another slice from his arresting Confessions; and A. Calder-Marshall writes a critique of Graham Greene. Among the poems it is a pleasure to find a characteristic Brian Howard, while the drawing is one of John Banting's most effective satirical blue-prints.

[In referring last week to a Fabian Society report called "The Unemployment Services," we stated that the publishers were Allen & Unwin. This should have been George Routledge.]

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

IT is a commonplace of musical criticism that the piano concerto, as a form, has suffered much at the hands of virtuosi intent on prestidigitation. So much, in fact, that up till recent years serious critics were apt to regard the form as if it had something intrinsically vulgar about it. It was thought of, in fact, as at best an inferior type of symphony, at worst an inflated "Maiden's Prayer." How untrue this is, the piano concertos of Beethoven and Mozart alone suffice to show; but then it is only of late that the latter have come into their own. Remains to rehabilitate a good many more that have fallen into unjust neglect, meanwhile pointing out that the concerto, while it may use symphonic form, is essentially different from the symphony in that it is a dramatic performance, akin to opera or the soprano scenas of Mozart. Among those concertos that come nearest to being pure symphonies Brahms's *Second Piano Concerto in B flat* is certainly the largest and richest in material. It is indeed a formidable work and only pianists of the most considerable *envergure* can encompass it. The most nearly perfect performance was, in my opinion, that of Arthur Rubinstein; but this set is unfortunately now quite out of date. Remains that of Schnabel and now a new one by Backhaus with the Saxon State Orchestra under Karl Böhm (H.M.V.). Schnabel's performance was in the grand style, but his technique is too capricious for the first movement to be safe in his hands and the result was in fact effortful and over-emphatic. The difficulty of recording this movement satisfactorily must in any case be immense—it is so thick and heavy in texture. The present set errs on the side of coarseness, but the orchestral playing is very fine and the individual instruments emerge most authentically. Backhaus is about as good a pianist as anyone without a spark of genius can be, and he gives a fine, objective performance, free from the tedious self-consciousness of Schnabel. On the other hand, it has grave drawbacks. His entry in the Andante is quite without tenderness, and later in the same movement his delivery of the wonderful starry passage in F sharp is much less "felt" than Schnabel's, though one may think that the latter takes it a shade *too* slowly. The tremendous Scherzo emerges less messy than it did from Schnabel's hands, but it has none of the rhythmical subtlety and effortless brilliance of Rubinstein's unforgettable rendering. Moreover Backhaus sees fit to introduce the theme of the Trio in octaves, instead of single notes as written! Neither Schnabel nor Backhaus perform the double-octave passage with the rapidity and lightness of Rubinstein, who, again, imparted to the Finale a feathery gaiety that you will seek in vain in Backhaus's deliberate, but accurate, performance. Personally, then, I prefer this set to the Schnabel, but I feel that few listeners will agree with me. I hope, on the other hand, to be able to persuade some to pay attention to the issue of Paderewski's *Piano Concerto in A minor*, played by Sanroma and the Boston Promenade Orchestra (H.M.V.). All lovers of the form will welcome this rescue, for the work—though of course much smaller potatoes than the Brahms—by no means deserved the abuse showered upon it by influential critics at its first appearance, nor yet the oblivion into which it has since fallen. The musical idiom owes something to Chopin and more to Dvorák; but there is a strong nerve of real originality running right through it and the structure of the movements, as well as the orchestration, is thoroughly musicianly. The writing for the solo instrument might be thought over-elaborate, but Mr. Sanroma, who is evidently an exceptional player, executes it all with complete ease. The first movement, which is full of beautiful things, has unfortunately a feeble and conventional coda; when one thinks of the opportunity seized by Beethoven and Brahms, in their Violin Concertos, at the end of the cadenza, Paderewski's failure to make a like use of his lovely second subject seems the more regrettable. The Romanza which follows is, however, an entire success—a magnificently beautiful and original piece of romantic music, admirably planned; but the Finale can only be described as clatter and clutter, aggravated by a second subject of hideous banality, blared out, four-square, by the brass. The recording is on the loud side and will not stand up well to fibres. Moreover, the balance between solo instrument and orchestra is not always what it should be: in the Romanza, for instance, the pianist is at one point allowed to hammer out the theme in stark octaves which entirely drown the moving string parts beneath them. Nevertheless the set must be bought. If H.M.V. are going in for reviving forgotten concertos, I would bring to their notice fine ones by Dohnányi and Nicolas Tcherepnin. (Moiseiwitsch used to play the latter and could no doubt be induced to do so again.) Then there is Mozart in D (K.451), the only one of the late piano concertos not, so far as I know, yet recorded. And why have we never been allowed a set of the same composer's superb *Clarinet Concerto?*

I yield to none in admiration for the qualities of Sir Adrian Boult, but after listening to his conducting of the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra in Tchaikovsky's *Serenade in C*, op. 48 (H.M.V.), I am obliged to conclude that he is not well adapted to interpret this music. Sir Adrian is the most matter-of-fact of conductors and Tchaikovsky requires someone with a streak of morbid sensibility in him to bring out the overripe grace of this music. The old Decca set was cut, but it had far more authentic feeling than this performance, which is as stodgy and flavourless as tapioca pudding. The string texture is never lightened for a moment; the rhythm is wooden; the Waltz has no lilt. Tchaikovsky should not be conducted as if he were Elgar. No such strictures apply to a recording, by Jean Pougnet and orchestra under Walter Goehr, of a *Violin Concerto in C* by Vivaldi (Col.). This is light music of the best kind. Vivaldi was not a first class composer, but the slow movement of this concerto shows him to have been capable of true melodic invention. Again, *Les Préludes* is emphatically second-rate Liszt, but that it is still capable of giving a certain spurious thrill is proved by Weingartner and the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (Col.). This is a really blazing performance and recording. So is that given by Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic (Col.) of Chabrier's *España*, an amusing and exhilarating work in which true artistry is concealed behind surface brilliance. Lovers of English music will find much to please them in John Ireland's *Concertino Pastorale*, played with the combination of warmth and neatness we have learnt to expect of the Boyd Neel String Orchestra (Decca). This is a harmless, well-made opuscule, especially in the Elgarian *Threnody* and the busy final *Toccata*. The first movement seems, by comparison, rather tenuous and inconclusive. The recording is good.

The *Kreutzer Sonata* is surely one of Beethoven's most aggressive works: it must be the masochist in us which makes us love it so dearly. Did not Tolstoy consider is positively devilish? However that may be, there are more fine sets of this masterpiece than of almost any other in the violin repertory. Cortot-Thibaud, Friedmann-Huberman, Menuhin-Menuhin, Kulenkampff-Kempff; and now Lili Kraus and Simon Goldberg enter the lists (Parl.). The choice is most difficult; but giving due regard to the nature of the work I think the palm still goes to the Kulenkampff-Kempff set (Decca). Sensitive, accurate and forceful as the Kraus-Goldberg team prove themselves to be, the performance of the two men has more *punch*—and that is a desideratum where this sonata is concerned. Worlds apart stands Mozart's little *Sonata for Piano in C* (K.545). Eileen Joyce touches it out with exquisite charm and delicacy (Parl.). On side four the musically more

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interesting still are the *Allemande and Courante* (K.399) by the same composer. These odd pieces were more or less admittedly composed as a pastiche of Handel; they are most uncommonly attractive. Miss Myra Hess's arrangement of the Bach chorale, *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, is by now as famous as her playing of it. Balance is what counts here and Miss Hess's mastery of it is perfect. The obverse of this ten-inch disc (H.M.V.) contains a delightful little *Sonata in G* by Scarlatti.

Legato singing can hardly be described as Lauritz Melchior's forte, so that he is not well suited to do justice to "*In fernem Lande*," from *Lohengrin*, Act III, or to "*Träume*," the fifth of the Wesendonck songs (H.M.V.). The land from which the singer claims to come does not seem to be nearly far enough away, and the heroic nostalgia of this fine aria is almost entirely lost. "*Träume*" goes better: the *mezza voce* is smooth and of good quality, and the central outburst is extremely well-managed. But this is really a woman's song and Tiana Lemnitz's rendering (Decca) is as good as one could desire; unfortunately it is accompanied, most insensitively, by a piano, whereas the Melchior version has the advantage of an accompaniment by the Philadelphia orchestra, which achieves the melting progressions in this song with a gradual calm and hush that are perfectly in place.

It is pleasant to be able to signal, after a long lapse of time, the appearance of a new album of miscellaneous songs from Mme. Elena Gerhardt. This consists of Brahms's eight *Zigeunerlieder*, "*Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht*," "*Der Gang zum Liebchen*" and "*Therese*," Schubert's "*Die Stadt*," "*Dithyrambe*," "*Wiegenlied*" and "*Ellens Zweiter Gesang*," and finally Wolf's "*Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag' erhoben*" and "*Und willst du deinen Liebsten sterben sehen.*" With the exception of the *Zigeunerlieder*, which some musicians admire greatly but which I find too Hungarian for my taste, the above songs could all be described as small masterpieces. And how wonderfully Mme. Gerhardt sings them! Every word is clear, not a phrase but is given precisely the right shape and emphasis. The discreet passion of "*Therese*"; the hostile resignation of "*Die Stadt*" (one of the most sinister songs ever written); the slightly comic charm, interpreted with miraculous delicacy, of "*Ellen*"; the matchless splendour of the two love-songs by Wolf; all this is rendered with incomparable art. One has seldom, of late years, heard Mme. Gerhardt in better voice; only in the rare moments when she is tempted considerably to increase the volume of tone, is one reminded that this singer's *Blütezeit* was long ago. Even so, she remains by far the greatest *Lieder*-singer alive.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 533

Set by Sam Smiles

The usual prizes are offered for four footnotes, in the style of Gibbon, to a history of the Decline and Fall of Europe. Competitors are reminded that Gibbon's footnotes are usually not concerned with his principal theme.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, May 3rd.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 531

Set by Thomas Smallbones

You are asked to imagine yourself to be the Regius Professor of Ancient English in the University of Pekin in the year A.L. (After Lenin), 1940. You are bringing out a new edition of *The Shropshire Lad* by A. E. Housman. The usual prizes are offered for a set of four daring emendations which you are making in the text with a brief justification of each of them.

Report by Thomas Smallbones

Although this competition attracted fewer entries than usual, such as there were were extremely ingenious and nicely caught the classical idiocy of textual criticism. Willie Tadpole, for instance, argues that in the line: "They carry back bright to the coiner the mintage of man," (XXIII):

> "there are two obvious misprints *coiner* for *corner* and *mintage* for *vintage*. *Corner* is here used in its special meaning of a place of shelter or storage excluding others. *Vintage* must be assumed to imply the hop-harvest, there being no other vine in England. A harvest of *mint*, a mere flavouring herb never under extensive cultivation, is beyond the range of possibility."

E. F. Carritt made a pleasing change of Manilius for Milton in the line: "And malt does more than Milton can," opposing objections on prosodic grounds by "the golden rule *potior difficilior lectio*" and using analogies from the pronunciation of English proper names to "make the metrical scheme easier." Johnny Dog was convinced that "the main body of the poems, produced in the Age of Lies are not by the man Housman but by the Bristol Group" and when I add that some of his substitutions were "blue-pencil" and "rill-mill," readers of Monitor in a recent issue of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will understand that the Bristol Group were exiles from Portland Place. Little Billie thought that poet's friends might be more aptly described as "rouge-lipt maidens" and "footlight lads" but hardly succeeded in justifying the change on any grounds other than those of paronomasia. Elizabeth Oakley and M. Bodington took the A.L. seriously and added dialectical materialism to their textual criticism; unfortunately the latter invented an A.L. Ancient English script which the type setter would be unable to reproduce. I particularly liked Mr. Snow's comment on the line: "I ranged the thymy wold" (XLII): "*Thymy* is corrupt and meaningless though Phunk professes to have found it in an obscure passage of Tennyson. I read with confidence *tiny*. Schmidt absurdly proposes *tidy*." That "with confidence" is very happy. Charles Furbank produced some amusing but irrelevant parodies of a popular advertisement beginning: "Lenin he say. . . ."

H. G. Ward came very close, but finally I recommend that the two prizes should be added together and divided between Charles Race and W. Empson.

PRIZES

XV.—Stands amid the glancing showers
John Bull, not Grecian Lad.

The Vulgate "jonquil" is meaningless. Wang-ho reads "John Quill": doubtfully explaining it as the pseudonym of a Meso-Archaic feuilletonist, possibly of his own invention, whom he calls Shaxper. But "John Bull," as the previous reference to "turf" makes abundantly clear, is, like "Grecian Lad," the name of a racehorse.

XXII.—Such Leagues apart the world's ends are,
We're like to meet no more.

Vulgate: "leagues." A necessary and (to all but Sing-So) obvious correction. (For Housman's devotion to football, vide XVII, XXVII, etc.).

XXXIV.—I will go where I am wanted, for the
sergeant does not mind;
He may be sick to see me, but he
treats me: very kind!

The Vulgate "he treats me very kind" is a typical example of the vices imported into a text by failure to punctuate. "Treats me" as is evident (though not to Ping-Pu) from the following line: "He gives me beer and breakfast"—is used in the technical sense of "standing refreshment." Ignorance, to be sure, is one of the more amiable failings of Ping-Pu and his school of criticism (if criticism is a fit name to give to twisting mumbo-jumbo out of plain English) but what are we to say of the perverse genius for obfuscation which makes an adverb of "kind"?

LXII.—I tell the tale that I heard told.
Methuselah, he died old.

The Vulgate "Mithridates" is patently (save to the purblind eyes of Hong-si) a corruption of the marginal gloss "Myth re dates" inserted by a scribe, perhaps an ancestor of Hong-si, who was unaware that poetry takes no account of possible exaggerations in Old Testament chronology.

CHARLES RACE

IV.—Up, lad, up, tis late for lying:
Hear the drums of morning play;
Hark, the empty highways crying
"Who'll beyond the hills away?"

The text no doubt is intelligible enough, but that is precisely the reason why this simpler version, very destructive of the irony of the poet, was able to impose itself on later editors. It must be remembered that the wars of this period were fought very largely in terms of propaganda. Now LYING is the first duty of a military propagandist and Press Attaché (such as the intellectualist poet clearly conceives himself to be) and it is this for which he fears he may be late. I therefore unhesitatingly read

Who'll be on the bills to-day?

—that is, on the newspaper placards, then regularly put up along the roads every morning.

VI.—When the lad for longing sighs,
Mute and dull of cheer and pale,
If at death's own door he lies,
Maiden, you can heal his ail.

Commentators have been baffled by the obscurity of this poem merely because they failed to notice that the women in Housman are all bar-maids. The truth is, it is essential to the irony of the poet to stress the parallel between the two functions of these unfortunates. The grotesque superstitution that alcohol is a medicine appears here together with a statement of the disastrous physical consequences of its use—"hollow tone," "sunken eye," etc. I read, as was obviously intended,

Maiden, you can deal his ale

XXV.—Far the calling bugles hollo,
High the screaming fife replies,
Gay the files of scarlet follow:
Woman bore me, I will rise.

This case provides our strongest evidence that the text has been tampered with. The situation is a clear one, especially in view of a corresponding poem in *Last Poems*—"In valleys green and still." The poet is sitting with a woman on the hill and decides that he will enlist in the army, because he prefers the company of the soldiers whom he sees passing. The suggestion that the irregular verb *bear* must be read here, though plausible, is nullified by the fact that it makes nonsense of the text. Altering only one vowel (as most readers do unconsciously) I restore the obvious sense of the poet—

Women bore me

LV.—And the youth at morning shine
Makes the vow he will not keep

It has been argued that this line is an example of "pessimism" and therefore that the text is sound. But evidently to imply that *no* vows are kept is mere untruth; some vows are kept and some not, whatever feelings about the universe a writer may have. Furthermore, we have a clear antithesis here from the preceding verse:

Where the lad lies down to rest
Stands the troubled dream beside.

In sensuality this lad finds "trouble," but in the intellectual life (like our Confucian poet) he finds calm. They stand related as night to morning. The *vow* is (no doubt) that he will pass some examination into the Civil Service; we know that the islanders at this date had already imitated the Chinese system, and the earlier references to "treading the mill" clearly refer to some educational process. I therefore read

Makes the vow he will not weep

—will not regret in his later career. The tendency to find immoral or sceptical sentiments in all ancient poets has now I hope been enough blown upon for plain sense to have its say here.

W. EMPSON

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, April 28, at 11 a.m. Professor M. Polanyi: "Social Action by Plan or by Principle." Admission free.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, W.2. April 28th, at 11, W. SCHULTZ: "THE SECOND CRUSADING AGE." At 6.30, V. FLEMMING: "MORAL EDUCATION."

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INDIA OFFICE,
April, 1940.

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Owing to the war there will be no recruitment to the above Services by Competitive Examination. Recruitment by selection without written examination will, however, be continued in 1940 for the Indian Police. One vacancy in the Burma Police (Class I) will also be filled by selection.

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Full particulars and forms of application may be obtained from the Appointments Boards of Universities in the British Isles, or from the Services Department, India Office, Whitehall, S.W.1.

The latest date for the receipt of applications is 15th May, 1940. Applications should, however, be submitted as soon as possible.
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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Rates and all information on page 569

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

HOW THE BUDGET FAVOURS BUSINESS AND EQUITY SHARES—SIR JOHN'S MISSED OPPORTUNITY—HOME RAILWAYS AND LIMITED DIVIDENDS—U.S.A. AND GOLD.

THERE was really nothing in this Budget to upset City gentlemen, save stockbrokers whose cost of living has gone up by 1*s.* 9*d.* a bottle. In fact, Sir John Simon went out of his way to be helpful to business, for he promised to revise the Excess Profits Tax so that companies which were in the development stage or in an acute depression in the pre-war years should no longer be penalised. I do not criticise him for that, but he has invited grave censure for failing to increase the National Defence Contribution. As I have more than once argued, the rich and prosperous companies in the stable trades are making an inadequate contribution to the finance of the war. Not having much excess profits subject to E.P.T., they have only to pay 5 per cent. of their profits (after debenture interest) towards N.D.C. The Chancellor, in removing a legitimate grievance of industry in the revision of E.P.T., has forgotten to meet the grievance of the individual taxpayer who has to pay more because some rich public companies are taxed too lightly. As for the limitation of dividends to the level of the three pre-war years, this is really to the interest of the equity shareholder. The value of an equity share tends to increase in the market the more surplus earnings are ploughed back in the business. What does it matter if bonus shares cannot be distributed during the war, if the fattest of all bonuses comes with the peace?

* * *

Sir John is making a big mistake in allowing public companies to retain their surplus earnings in their entirety. It may encourage some company directors to try to evade Excess Profits Tax, as they did in the last war, by improving their property and plant under the guise of increased expenses. In any case it will induce public companies to increase their expenditure on capital goods to the detriment of the output of war equipment goods. It may be argued that they will be unable to acquire the steel and other raw materials for their capital goods improvement, but in that case what is the point of allowing them to retain their surplus earnings in their business? No, this limitation of dividends, as it stands, is a one-sided proposal. It is sound enough to restrict the expenditure of private individuals by limiting the amount of dividends they will receive in time of war, but it is wrong to encourage the private expenditures of public companies.

* * *

On this question it is pertinent to quote from a letter I received from a correspondent who considers that small shareholders are penalised as against the big when companies plough back portions of their profits. He writes: "Most people, I think, are aware how this affects the wealthy person. If he owned a business or were in partnership then the whole of the profits —no matter how much were ploughed back— would rank not only for income tax but also for super tax. If, however, he is a shareholder in several companies and these companies plough back a portion of their profits, then, although income tax is paid on the whole of the profits, only that portion of the profits which is paid as dividend ranks for super tax. It is quite possible that a large number of taxpayers avoid paying a certain amount of super tax in this way." This means that Sir John Simon is losing revenue in more ways than one when he allows public companies to retain all their surplus profits in their business. What he should have done, of course, is to have compelled public companies to loan the bulk of their surplus profits to the Treasury. At the end of the war, when the inevitable slump has overtaken our heavy industries, the release of these compulsory loans would be the surest way of bringing back prosperity. So keen was Sir John to make debating points against Mr. Keynes and to prove that the voluntary spirit burned in the hearts of investors that he has missed a wonderful opportunity to apply compulsory savings to public companies for their own, and the common, good.

* * *

Will the home railways fall within the Chancellor's limitation of dividends to the pre-war level? The market seemed confident that they would not, for it marked up sharply not only the prices of the junior preference stocks but of all the ordinary stocks as well. The Chancellor, of course, explained that a minimum rate of dividend, which he defined as 4 per cent., would be allowed in the case of companies which in the recent past had been unable to pay that minimum. This would permit a substantial dividend increase in the case of L.M. & S. ordinary, Southern deferred ordinary and L. & N.E. 5 per cent. preferred ordinary. G.W.R. was marked up a point to 48½ on the day after the Budget, which seemed to suggest that a potential 4 per cent. stock supported by a good margin of earnings was not considered dear under 60. If Sir John Simon is anxious to restrict private consumption by limiting the payment of dividends it is strange that he sees nothing wrong in allowing the railway companies to pay out larger dividends on millions of ordinary capital.

* * *

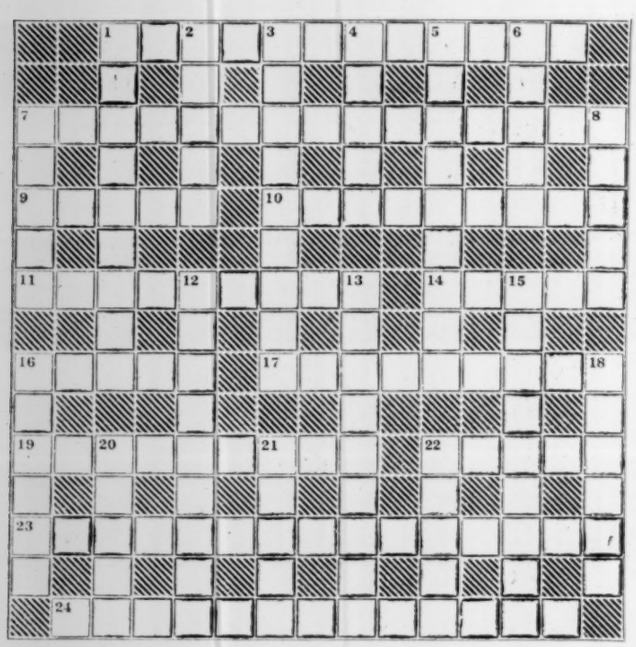
The ill-defined Purchase Tax has not had a good reception, but that the Chancellor put his Budget "over" the City I am the first to admit—in the face of a rise in old War Loan to nearly 101 and in the recovery of new War Loan to par. But second thoughts are more important. I believe it will be found that Sir John has not been severe or realistic enough in this Budget —either in raising adequate taxation or by raising loans—and that to salute him by staging a little boom in the gilt-edged market was probably misguided enthusiasm on the part of short-sighted stockholders.

* * *

My remarks on the reluctance of the American Treasury to play the game (in gold) with the Allies has excited some comment. A correspondent very properly contrasts the willingness of the American Treasury to accept gold from Japan in payment for U.S. exports. Apparently Japan has been meeting her adverse trade balance since the outbreak of her China "incident" by shipping gold to America. My correspondent believes that her total shipments of gold since the beginning of 1937 must be in excess of $600 millions. It is difficult to reconcile acceptance of gold from a country which has no commercial treaty with the U.S.A. with the American Treasury's pressure on the Allied Governments to sell their dollar securities. Incidentally, another correspondent points out that it is beside the mark to criticise the British Treasury's selection of the requisitioned dollar securities on the grounds of individual losses or hard cases. I entirely agree. The burden of my complaint is that it is against the national interest to select stocks which, looking cheap to the American buyers, are most likely to rise in market value. And talking of hard cases, why should not Sir John Simon, the self-confessed apostle of the voluntary principle, introduce the voluntary system to some extent into the requisitioning? Why not ask for voluntary lenders of American stocks at the market?

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 529

Set by L.-S.



ACROSS

1. Court ramp?
7. What a Victorian girl went through.
9. They spring from the lotus.
10. Where the prize artist keeps his sketches?
11. He figures it out symbolically.
14. To talk in Roman style.
16. This would be a change for a miner.
17. Kept on the boil.
19. No one unfrocked could be so attired.
22 (rev). The sort of house where you would get no commons.
23. Kentish men cultivate it.
24. Sweet command.

DOWN

1. This isn't the book of brutality.
2. O K son, about turn!
3. The mark of a young writer.
4. Down with the N.U.R.
5. All but ends in smoke.
6 (rev.). Things loom up when people do this.
7. The kind of gentleman in velvet.
8. A distress signal is about right.
12. The pilot carries underneath his machine the — drop on an enemy warship.
13. Not a bit of eternity.
15. Words with which we shall finally dismiss the war?
16. Peel of Indian mango.
18. Very proper, madam.
20 Pears sliced up.
21. No more than a drop inside.
22. Vedantic alternative.

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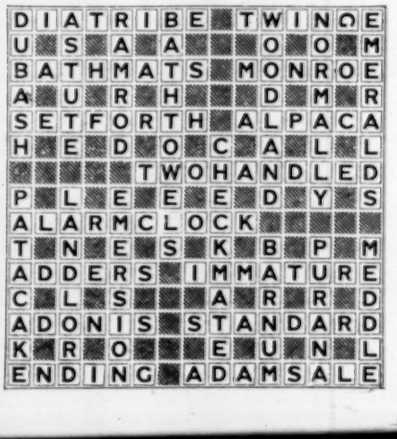
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K R O E U N L
ENDING ADAMSALE

Company Meeting

DUNLOP RUBBER COMPANY LIMITED

SIR J. GEORGE BEHARRELL'S ADDRESS

THE 41st Ordinary General Meeting of the Dunlop Rubber Company, Limited, was held in London on Wednesday last. Sir J. George Beharrell, D.S.O. (Chairman) referred at the opening of his speech to the economic conditions prior to the war and to the Board's work of improving the structure and efficiency of the world-wide Dunlop organisation.

He continued (in part) :—

It was only reasonable to expect that, with favourable trade conditions, your Company would enjoy a good year in 1939, but events have gone beyond this and, had it not been for the war, I think I should have been able to present results even better than those now before you. In fact, everything seemed to go the right way for us. The demand for our products was good with very few exceptions, both at home and abroad, and prices remunerative; the rising price of rubber, which averaged 9*d.* over the whole year, as against just under 7¼*d.* in 1938, benefited the Plantations Companies, and in its purchases of raw materials, especially rubber and cotton, your Board's policy has proved wise.

I want to make it quite clear that this result was mainly obtained through our normal trade activities, only 7½ per cent. of the total turnover of the Dunlop Group of Companies for the year being due to direct Government orders. If we take the turnover of Home Companies alone, this business only represented 14 per cent. of the turnover. The proportion of Government business increased after the outbreak of war and to-day is, of course, considerably higher. We have responded promptly to all demands made upon us, demands which have involved the Company in considerable capital outlay.

THE ACCOUNTS

The Net Profit for the year amounted to £2,853,000 compared with £1,501,000 in 1938. A reference to the comparative results for the years 1934–39 shows at a glance how the level of profits in 1939 is far in excess of those of the preceding five years. While paying due regard to the uncertainty and difficulties which are ahead of all large undertakings, the Board decided, after providing for the Preference Dividends, to recommend a Dividend of 8 per cent. on the Ordinary Stock and a Bonus of 4 per cent., Income Tax has been deducted from this Dividend and Bonus at the rate of 7*s.* 6*d.* in the £.

This recommendation was, of course, made without any knowledge of legislation affecting the dividends of Public Companies outlined by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in opening his Budget in the House of Commons yesterday. If a limitation is imposed by Parliament we shall be subject to it, of course, in future, during the period for which the legislation operates. Dunlop shares, after the large losses incurred in the post-war period, were reduced to one-third of their original nominal value, so that on the original par value the distribution is only equivalent to 4 per cent.

After providing for this increased distribution, the Directors have been able to increase still further the financial strength of the Company, and I am sure this decision will be wholeheartedly approved. Out of the available profits of £3,456,000 there has been provided for Taxation the sum of £1,027,000. This provision includes the Income Tax liability for the fiscal year 1939–40, together with the estimated liabilities for Excess Profits' Tax and National Defence Contribution. In addition, the sum of £500,000 has, for the reasons given in the Directors' Report, been transferred to Income Tax Reserve towards the 1940–41 liability. The Directors hope that in the near future it will be possible to raise this Reserve to a level that will cover fully the Income Tax liability of the succeeding year. This Reserve will ensure that, if in any year the level of profits falls, the balance available for distribution as Dividend will not be reduced by a heavy Income Tax liability based upon the higher level of profits of the preceding year.

The total charge to the year 1939 for Taxation on profits is £1,527,000, in addition to which there has been borne by Subsidiary Companies a taxation charge of £861,000, making a total for the Dunlop Group of Companies for the year of £2,388,000; the comparable figure for the year 1938 was £820,000. The aggregate burden of Taxation for 1939, therefore, represents an increase of £1,568,000, compared with that for the preceding year. These facts will make clear to you the great burden that Industry carries in time of war. You will all, I know, agree that every Company should make its fair contribution to the cost of the war, but the law regulating the Excess Profits Tax, as it stands at present, leads to many serious inequities which, in our opinion, will increase unfairly the burden falling upon Companies similarly situated to ourselves. Probably the most serious is the treatment of the profits of Foreign Subsidiaries. The problem bristles with difficulties far too technical for discussion here. In association with others, strong representations are being made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I hope his promise to amend the Act will be carried out in the very near future. Subsidiary Companies having unfavourable results in the base years will be specially affected and you have several in this position. Where losses were incurred in the base years it is quite possible that the liability to Excess Profits Tax may absorb the whole of subsequent profits. In my view, the only equitable basis is that Excess Profits Tax should be levied only on the amount of profits remitted to this country. In view of the outbreak of the war, the Directors decided to write down to £1 the Company's Investments in Germany, which stood in the books at £355,000, and also to write £208,000 off an Investment in a Subsidiary Company which has substantial interests in Central Europe. These amounts were charged to the Special Reserve against Investments in and advances to Subsidiaries, thus reducing this Reserve to £1,752,000. In order to build this Reserve up to £2,000,000, the sum of £248,000 has been transferred to it from the Profit and Loss Appropriation Account. The sum of £200,000 has been transferred to the Reserve for Contingencies, bringing that Reserve up to £1,514,000.

The Chairman then dealt with various items in the accounts and continued :

DUNLOP PLANTATIONS

Dunlop Malayan Estates Limited was able to declare a dividend of 6 per cent. on its first nine months' operation to 31st December, 1939. This has enabled Dunlop Plantations to reduce its deficit to £19,400 at the end of 1939, in spite of the heavy provision that has had to be made for taxation. The dividend on the Preference Shares of Dunlop Plantations has again been paid by the Dunlop Rubber Company under its guarantee. The prospects for the current year, so far as dividends from the Malayan Company are concerned, appear to be exceptionally bright, but taxation may absorb a very substantial part of the balance available for distribution by the Plantations Company. This is one of your Subsidiaries with an unfavourable base year for calculating Excess Profits Tax liability. We have received excellent reports of the working of the Malayan Company.

HOME COMPANIES AND DIVISIONS

The Dunlop Cotton Mills were, from the beginning of the year, called upon for maximum output and records in weekly production were achieved in both Spinning and Weaving Departments.

TYRE DIVISION

Dealing now with the business of the Tyre Division; you will realise, the outbreak of war was accompanied by a huge increase in the demands of the Services. First consideration was, of course, given to national needs, even although an amount of normal business was thereby jeopardised. This position is now in course of recovery, and I know that the assistance which your Company has been able to give to the Government Departments concerned, is highly regarded. The sales of motor covers for the first eight months of 1939 promised a record year. This situation was entirely changed by the severe restrictions on private motoring necessitated by the outbreak of war. Replacement sales of motor car tyres for the complete year were below those of 1938, and sales for original equipment had to fall into line with the reduced volume of car production. The position of commercia vehicle tyres was better, as commercial transport was not interfered with to the same extent. As a result, our total sales of commercial vehicle tyres for the year constituted a record.

We also had record sales of aero covers, due, of course, to the armament programme, and the replacement business in cycle tyres was the highest we have ever known. With the assistance of these compensating factors, the net profits of the Tyre Division showed a substantial increase. Our Rim and Wheel Companies also had a successful year.

RUBBER PRODUCTS GROUP

The General Rubber Goods Division made further progress, sales reaching a record high level.

The Garment Division suffered from poor trading conditions in London and the south of England during the early part of the year. Later on conditions improved and in addition Government contracts were negotiated, with the result that the total net profit showed an increase over 1938. The turnover of the Footwear Division showed an increase in volume over 1938. The profits of the Sports Division declined in 1939, but in all the circumstances this was to be expected. Regarding the India Tyre and Rubber Company Limited, from the point of view of production, sales and profits, the year has been one of excellent progress.

OVERSEAS COMPANIES

The Chairman then dealt with the Overseas Companies and said :

This Group shows the greatest improvement. Its profits are nearly 9 times greater than in the previous year, and account for over half the increase in the total profits of the Company.

WAR CONDITIONS

Your Board felt it desirable to make war allowances to the less highly paid of the Company's employees, in order that their standard of life might not suffer unduly. It was felt, that while the Company's position permits, those who leave its employment to serve their country ought not to suffer financially. The Board therefore introduced a scheme for effecting this, which has been very warmly appreciated.

A.R.P. measures :—the total expenditure for all our factories and offices will amount to over £200,000.

National Savings Groups were established at the Company's factories, depots and warehouses.

It is my custom at these meetings to ask you to send a message of thanks to Dunlop employees in this country and overseas, on whose loyal co-operation the welfare of the Company so largely depends. To-day I ask for this with emphasis.

PROSPECTS

What can I say of the future? Had the war not come upon us, I firmly believe that we should have had an even more prosperous year in 1939 and might have looked forward to equal prosperity in 1940. The strength of our organisation and the solidity of our financial position would, I think, have justified such optimism. But as things are to-day in this war-shaken world, you will hardly expect that degree of optimism from me—indeed you will hardly expect me to prophecy at all. There are too many unknown and unknowable factors.

We are better fitted than we have ever been to take advantage of whatever opportunities may arise for normal trading at home and abroad, but as the war goes on, trading conditions are likely to become more and more abnormal. An increasing proportion of our output will probably be required to meet Government demands, the profits on which are closely controlled and will be below those which are usually regarded as adequate, and even necessary, for sound trading. We may have to contend with shortages of labour and materials. Profits will be dependent on prices both here and overseas, the trend of which no one can foresee with certainty. The staggering burden of taxation may increase.

I can only say that our goodwill is more valuable all over the world than ever before; that our organisation is in better shape than at any time within my experience, to cope with any difficulties that may confront us; and that, like the rest of the country and the Empire, we face the future with determination and confidence.

The Report was unanimously adopted.